

Marshal Ney.

THE HISTORY

OF

THE RESTORATION

OF

MONARCHY IN FRANCE.



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TRANSLATED BY

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IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

BELL & DALDY, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN

AND 186 FLEET STREET.

1865.

PRINTED BY W. CLOWES AND SONS, STAMFORD STREET

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I

We will now return to Napoleon, whom we left at noon on the 20th of April, at the moment when he threw himself into his carriage, with moistened eyes and heart-broken, at the conclusion of his simple and sublime adieu to his guard. He departed for that still royal exile in Elba, assigned to him by the

want of foresight of the European cabinets, as a favourable point for observing the coasts of France and Italy, from which he could hear the faintest murmur and respond to the slightest call of fortune and his partisans.

Nor did he depart like Dioclesian or Charles V.—these sovereigns, satiated with empire and weary of human grandeur, who abandoned their thrones from an irretrievable disgust for ambition, and who only looked back on the past to lament the years they had lost in seeking for happiness by reigning over their fellow beings. He was not going, under a second delusion like theirs, to look for peace in the gardens of Salona, or for holiness in a monastery: he departed vanquished, humbled, betrayed, abandoned, irritated, embittered, scarce striving to feign, and counterfeiting badly, a resignation forced by the ingratitude and dastardliness of his generals, accusing his people, cursing his brothers, regretting his wife, his son, his palaces, his crowns, incapable of bending himself to a private station of life, however splendid it still might be, and having at so early an age and for so many years contracted a habit of universal power, that, with him, to live was to reign, and to reign no longer was worse than death. He did not, therefore, depart without the hope of returning, or without having already warped in his own thoughts, and with his few adherents, the first meshes of the net which he hoped one day or other to throw from his island over the continent. Princes of royal blood, who are born upon the throne, sometimes abdicate with sincerity, because they bear with them and recover, so to speak, their grandeur in their name and in their blood; but princes who have been raised to empire even by glory, never abdicate irrevocably, because in descending from the throne they only fall back upon their humble origin, which they look upon as a humiliation to their pride. Such was Napoleon. The immense renown which he carried into exile, and which must follow his name to posterity, was not sufficient for him. He wished to live with universal power, and to die on the summit of that throne to which he had raised himself. The grief and shame of his fall had already formed within him an involuntary and perpetual conspiracy.

II.

He had sent on before him, from stage to stage, to protect him on his journey, and to embark with him, the regiment of his guard which he was allowed to take with him to Elba, as a guard of honour according to the spirit of the treaty, but in his own mind as a vanguard of war. He knew the power of a band of faithful soldiers in the chances of a war, and above all, in the vicissitudes of a revolution. A detachment of 1,500 chosen men, representing the French army, might be, at a given day, the most captivating standard for his cause; and the imprudence of the allies and of the Bourbons had still left him in possession of this spell

III

The commissioners of the allied powers accompanied Napoleon to the place of embarkation, to guarantee at one and the same time his safety and his departure. Fréjus had been chosen in order to avoid the dense population of the principal ports, and the *Undaunted*, an English frigate, awaited him there.

His journey was gloomy, clandestine, and rapid; for in travelling through France he had alike to dread the obstinate fanaticism of his partisans in the military provinces of the Centre, and the fanaticism of hatred in the population of the South. The march of the detachments of his guard resembled a funeral procession escorting the remains of their glory and of their Emperor to the tomb. A crowd wavering in the midst of emotion, happy in the prospect of peace, but respectful towards the remnant of our armies, a mournful silence, a murmur of commiseration amongst some, of resentment amongst others, some scattered cries of "Vive Napoleon!" beneath the windows of the hotel where the Emperor reposed, alone distinguished his journey through these provinces which had been ruined by his wars, but which were proud of his glory. After evincing these last symptoms of emotion around

his residence, the groups of people dispersed, and the streets remained silent and deserted up to his departure. It was not deemed prudent to pass through Lyons in the day time. The population of that great city, though it had been decimated by the extinction of industry and commerce, and conquered at this moment by that foreign invasion occasioned by his boundless ambition, still cherished for him a feeling of gratitude for the restoration of its religion, for its edifices rebuilt after the siege by the National Convention, and for the revolutionary turbulence stifled under his despotism. Lyons, is the least intellectual of the cities of France, because its mercantile and routine genius is entirely devoted to a love of gain, and therefore best accommodates itself to the silent and arbitrary rule of a soldier's hand. Napoleon slept in one of its suburbs under the guard and protection of a regiment of Cossacks.* He had just left the Russians masters of his capital, and he thus found in the heart of his empire, the barbarous hordes of the North, as a vengeance of destiny and a visible chastisement for Moscow. Insulting cries reproached him with it on his departure from Lyons, and these maledictions increased from city to city, and from stage to stage, in proportion as he advanced towards the South. He was frequently obliged, in order to shield himself from them, to conceal his features from the eager looks of the people, and to mislead the crowd by taking shelter in the carriages of the foreign commissioners. But a more painful meeting awaited him between Vienne and Valence. While walking up a steep ascent of the road, he was overtaken by the carriage of Marshal Augereau, then on his return from Paris. Augereau, who was an old soldier of the Revolution, had preserved all the rudeness of that epoch. On meeting with his Emperor, vanquished, exiled, and humbled, he recollected only his ancient rivalship with this favourite of armies, now punished for his supremacy by his fall. He alighted from his carriage, and accosted Napoleon with more familiarity than a generous soul would have evinced even towards well-merited misfortune. He seemed to have forgotten the twenty years of respect he had paid as a subordinate to the ruler of France, to recur to those days when he was the equal

of one to whom he was indebted for so many commands, titles, honours, and fortune. He made use of that familiar style which, in France, is only allowable to inferior or very intimate friends, while reproaching him in unmeasured terms for his ruinous and mad ambition. He had already, in a recent proclamation to his troops, blamed the Emperor for not having dared to die like a soldier. Hurt, but still indulgent, Napoleon at first affected to have forgotten this outrage, and to see in Augereau only an old friend embittered by misfortune; but the marshal continuing his reproaches with the rudeness and obstinacy of a soldier who forgets himself, the Emperor bade him farewell, and threw himself, goaded, into his carriage. The reproaches of the world had borrowed the voices of his own generals, who courted the favour of the new government by the bitterness of their language, and the tardy audacity of their demeanour before him. Augereau, without raising his hat, placed his hands behind his back and responded to the farewell of his general by a simple motion of the head, which seemed contemptuously to dismiss the fallen fortune with a nod.

IV.

At Valence, a garrison town, where he had passed in the artillery school the best and most studious period of his youth, he made his entry by day-light, and recognised with emotion, the landscapes, the old familiar haunts, the houses, and the names of families which recalled his most distant recollections. He came back, dethroned and vanquished, to the starting point of so many victories and so much grandeur. His eyes became clouded and his memory flew back for a moment to his early companions, to the scenes, the dreams, the tender reminiscences of other days. He there saw for the first time the *drapeau blanc* of the Bourbons on the public buildings, and the white cockade in the soldiers' shakos. This visible sign of another empire than his own seemed to confirm to him the vanishing of his power, and he turned away his eyes. But as though Valence felt honoured at having formerly educated and nurtured within its walls the man of the age, it

evinced no sign either of joy or malignity at his fall, but suffered him to pass unheeded without any other reproach than that of its silence.

V

But on quitting Valence, where his name had the influence of a local souvenir and of great favours diffused during his reign amongst its principal families, he found the South all up and stirring with irritation and fanaticism against his name. The recollection of the persecutions of the Cevennes, the religious causes converted into and perpetuated as political causes, the massacres of Avignon, the insurrections of Marseilles, the taking of Toulon by the English, the quick and impassioned character of the people, where the fire of the sun seems to inflame all hearts, had left amongst the parties in these provinces elements of fermentation easily called into action. The masses, less reflective and more sensual than in the north of France, had preserved there, more than elsewhere, the impassioned superstitions of old things and of old races. The return of the Bourbons to Paris had appeared to the royalist people of the South a personal victory of their own over the opposing party. The name of Napoleon represented there all that the people abhorred; his fall did not seem to them a vengeance and a surety sufficient against the possible return of his domination. His death alone could assuage the dread and hatred which he inspired. The dregs of the people had been agitated for some days at the rumour of his expected passage under the walls of Orange and of Avignon; and if crime was not actually meditated amongst them, at least they prepared outrage. It was intended that he should leave France accompanied by the imprecations of the South; and the commissioners who were informed of this disposition on the part of the people, could only secure the safety of their captive by sheltering his unpopularity under false indications of hours which misled the populace, and under the shades of night, which hid Napoleon from the towns and villages through which he passed. One of the couriers who preceded his carriage, on arriving at Orgon found the

multitude assembled in the square, surrounding an effigy of Napoleon hung up on a gibbet, in front of the post-house, and threatening to carry into effect this infamous punishment on the person of the tyrant. This courier returned with all speed to acquaint the commissioners with the disposition of the rabble. They accordingly slackened their progress; they pretended to have received counter-orders, and the town was misled as to the moment of the Emperor's arrival. The impatient crowd, therefore, dispersed; and Napoleon, disguised as a courier, wearing a hat and cloak which entirely concealed his features, passed thus, under favour of the twilight, the last group which awaited his carriage in the square; but he heard the murmurs, the maledictions, and the menaces of death which arose at his name. At the tavern of the *Accolade*, where he stopped to wait for the commissioners, he was obliged to assume another disguise to pass through the town of Aix, where the same hatred existed against him. The cries of "Down with the Corsican," "Death to the tyrant," pursued him from stage to stage. At Aix the exasperation was so great that the authorities were compelled to close the gates of the city to prevent the populace from rushing, armed with murderous weapons, to the road he was to pass. His carriage took a circuitous route which removed him from the walls; but the outcries of the crowd reached his ears whilst they changed horses to draw it towards the coast. He arrived at length in safety at the chateau of Luc, where his sister, the Princess Pauline Borghese, was waiting to embark with him, proud to share at least his exile as she had shared in all, the pride, the splendour, and the wreck of his fortune.

On the following day, the 28th of April, Napoleon was received on board the *Undaunted* frigate, which removed him from the regrets of some, from the fury of others, from the thoughts of all, having in a few days run the gauntlet of his unpopularity. He recovered his composure when the waves rolled between him and the continent, and conversed about his new abode with the mental relaxation of a man anxious to bury painful recollections, and thenceforward to rest his harassed soul on the perspective of an obscure life, divested of all ambition.

VI.

The dark mountains of the Isle of Elba soon rose above the horizon of the Mediterranean, tracing before his eyes the limits of his new empire. He disembarked there with his guard, amidst the astonishment and satisfaction of the scanty population of the island: and, as though he still believed in the actual existence of his empire, he mounted his horse and rode to the fortifications. These he inspected with the same scientific glance that he would have bestowed upon the walls Gibraltar, of Malta, or of Antwerp; ordering them to be repaired and put in a state of defence. He felt confident that in the event of war with one or several of the European powers he could hold out seven or eight months upon this island, naturally fortified by its waves, by its rocks, and by the defiles of its mountains. He afterwards rapidly inspected the accessible sites of his new abode, accompanied by his officers, and by the inspectors of mines; he devised, as he galloped along, plans of establishments which he pretended he would create for the improvement of agriculture, the working of the iron mines, and the advancement of the trade and shipping of the island. The inhabitants of Elba were astonished at this mental activity, which the struggle with the world did not appear to have worn out. They conceived hopes of riches and of fame for their little island. The renown of a great man, attaching itself not only to his life but to his tomb amongst them, would attract thither the attention of the world and of futurity. The place and the man are identical in the eyes of history, and the renown of the island of Elba was about to grow with that of Napoleon

VII.

The island is distant a few hours' sail from Corsica, the birth-place of the Emperor. He found there again the horizon of his infancy, the sky, the air, the waves, the ruggedness and majesty of outline which mark out to navigators the sum-

mits of Sardinia, of Corsica, of Ponza, of Piombino, of Santellaria, and of Capri; a chain of sub-marine mountains, which seem to border at a distance, like so many gigantic rocks, the coasts of France, of Italy, and of Spain, interrupted only by wide spaces which comprise the great maritime routes from the Western World to the East. These islands at all times, by their isolation from the continent, by their inaccessibility, and by their wild and rugged form, served as places of banishment, of exile, or of imprisonment to the primitive people on the eastern coast of Italy. Their inhabitants, a mixture of Arab, Greek, and Roman colonists, preserve with a genius of their own, energetic and adventurous as their ocean, traces of their ancient origin. The courage of the Romans, the imagination of the Hellenes, and the seafaring and pastoral genius of the Arabs are fully visible in their manners, mingled with the sombre gravity of insular tribes, who recollect after the lapse of a thousand years that they have lost their native land. The soil and the inhabitants of the island of Elba have all these characteristics. The island—which is nothing but a block of iron covered with rock, notched and jagged by the winds, and with a layer of earth accumulated in the hollows of the hills—displays but few narrow valleys winding between the mountains and little creeks, half opening to receive the waves of the ocean. Amidst these meanderings, and on the slopes of hills which look upon the sea of Italy, nature and cultivation have enclosed some rural domains and some gardens, shaded by olive trees and watered by scanty streams. It is in one of these creeks that the town of Porto Ferrajo presents its roadstead, its port, and its fortifications to the wanderers of the deep.

VIII.

In a few days the Emperor, eager to take possession of his future abode, was established, with his household, his guard, and his sister Pauline, in the buildings of the ancient chateau and in the principal houses of the town. He hastened to order such erections and improvements to be made as might conduce to the comfort of himself or his court, together with

barracks for his 1,500 troops. He armed and reviewed the militia of the island, and animated them with some degree of military patriotism, as if he still wished to keep up the game of sovereignty and love of country. He resumed the habits and surrounded himself with all the luxuries of his French palaces, having, to all appearance, only changed his seat of government. This might have been perhaps from a desire to disarm the suspicions of Europe from the very outset, by assuming the aspect of a happy ambition easily gratified by such trifles; or he might have felt sufficiently great within himself to preserve, without derision, the etiquette and vanity of a great empire on a desert rock of the Mediterranean; or he might have been acting in conformity with his somewhat theatrical character, the comedy of power and royalty to the audience of his own followers and the continent of Europe.

The autumn of 1814 and the whole winter were passed in this manner by Napoleon; luxury mingling with simplicity, and festivity with retirement in his residence. The wreck of his immense fortune and the first instalments of the allowance secured to him by treaty, appeared to have been devoted by him to the embellishment of the island and to the acquisition of a small fleet, destined, as he alleged, to the commercial and military service of his new subjects. To this flotilla he had given a flag as to a naval power intended to maintain a position, and to make itself recognised and respected in the waters of the Mediterranean. Works of art, furniture, books, and the journals of Europe, arrived for him incessantly from Genoa, Leghorn, and Paris. The eyes of the world were upon this little island. English travellers, with whom curiosity is one of those passions which neither distance nor national shyness can prevent the gratification of, flocked from London, from Rome, from Naples, and from Tuscany to gaze upon the man whose hatred had so long made their island tremble, and imprisoned England within the limits of its ocean. Neither upon the shores of Greece, of Asia, or of Italy could they find any monument or any ruin so imposing as this Prometheus of the West. They gloried in only having caught a glimpse of him; and in their correspondence and their journals they

boasted of a word or a gesture by which the hero, within his circle, might have repaid their importunate adulation. London and Paris resounded with the lightest step and the most trifling word of Napoleon, who, on his part, affected to receive the travellers with ease and grace, as one who had laid aside all arms and conquered all hatred, and who demanded nothing more in this world than an asylum in every heart, a favourable souvenir in all imaginations. Pauline Borghese, the most beautiful and most worshipped woman of her time, had transferred her court and attracted her admirers to the island of Elba. She adorned the exile of her brother, gave life and soul to it, impassioned it with her charms, and made it touching by her fidelity to misfortune. She constituted the splendour and the grace, while she did the honour of his saloons. Concealing thus, under the guise of pleasure and of trivial occupations, a more serious and political devotion, she travelled, under the pretext of visiting her sisters and brothers, from Elba to Rome and Naples, and from Rome and Naples to Elba; an ambassadress without seeming importance, and free from suspicion, whose very volatility shielded her in the eyes of the continent from all imputation of sinister intentions.

IX.

Meanwhile Napoleon, who concealed even from Bertrand and Cambronne, his two lieutenants in exile, the thoughts he had nourished since his departure from Fontainebleau, was watching, apparently without interest, but in reality with attention, the attitude of Europe, of France, and of the congress of Vienna. He had upon his rock no other confidant than his own heart; but on the continent he had many eyes looking out for him, and watchwords had been agreed upon with a small number of his old adherents in Paris; signs which he alone could read, and of which the emissaries who brought them, under various pretexts, did not themselves know the importance or the signification. Besides the princes and princesses of his own family, three men in Paris had agreed with Napoleon at Fontainebleau to keep him acquainted with the

current of events, to apprise him of any new danger that might threaten him, and to give the signal for his return should fortune ever again lay France open to his footsteps. These three silent but watchful confidants were Maret, whose only policy was the will of the Emperor; Savary, so bound by the ties of the heart and by secret complicities, that he could not detach himself either in word or honour from his general and his friend; Lavalette, whom a laudable but excessive gratitude enchained even to blind obedience to the destiny of his benefactor. Other men, more obscure but equally useful, and some ladies of the old imperial court, inflamed by the recollections of the pride or the love of their vanished youth, agitated, concerted, and conspired around these principal leaders of the intrigue. The privileged or salaried writers of the old imperial police with heart and hand fomented this conspiracy, the secret of which might easily be concentrated in very few hands; for it was above all things a tacit conspiracy, without correspondence, without meetings, without arms, without witnesses, without soldiers; in short, a conspiracy of the heart. The whole army formed part of it without being aware of the fact. These are the only conspiracies which succeed. They are suspected, they are known, they are felt; those engaged in them cannot be named, convicted, or seized. Such was the Bonapartist conspiracy during the nine months exile of Napoleon.

X

The Emperor had read history deeply while he himself was preparing the greatest pages of modern times. He possessed an intuitive genius for this study, like all men predestined by their nature to originate or to govern events. His Italian soul had the instincts, the profound and analytical sagacity, the prompt resolves and lightning flashes of Machiavel. This policy, still further sharpened at the moment in him by the ruggedness of his ambition and by the irritation of his regrets, did not allow him to overlook any of the difficulties or inconsistencies of the Bourbons. Before many months had

elapsed he saw them at loggerheads with the too-exacting party of the old regime, with the untameable party of the Revolution, with the dethroned military party, and with the Empire; while unable to reconcile to himself the acquiescence of France in her present littleness after all Europe had been overrun, conquered, and possessed. He heard from his island the murmurs of these 50,000 officers or sub-officers, condemned, without pay, or on half-pay, to the idleness of their villages and the obscure condition of their respective families. He knew that the treasury, exhausted by his wars and by the foreign occupation, could neither assuage their poverty nor promote them in time of peace. Already also he heard the recriminations of all these states, rent in fragments by the arbitrary fiat of the congress of Vienna, after having been grouped in imposing nationalities, and compelled to return under the narrow and superannuated domination of their ancient reigning houses. He foresaw, for all the sovereigns as well as for the Bourbons themselves, the difficulty of suddenly disbanding these immense armies which they had been obliged to levy against him. He counted upon the quick and feverish inoculation of the doctrines of liberty, which it had been necessary to evoke from the bosom of Germany to urge her to independence. He looked for explosions of that liberalism which he considered to be the deadly malady of the modern world, because it struck at the power of absolute thrones and elevated itself upon their fall, like the spirit of the present age after the tyranny of the past. He discovered the first symptoms of it in the timid but bitter opposition journals of Paris; in the agitations of Milan, where liberty was tumultuously applauded by young men at the theatre; in the funeral of Mademoiselle Raucourt, a Parisian artist, at which the people hooted the priesthood and profaned the church; in the obsequies of Louis XVI., at St. Denis, during which, the faubourgs had renewed against the Count d'Artois the vociferations and the sanguinary symbols of 1793. He rejoiced in secret at the first political quiverings of Europe, hoping that after having profited by this agitation of the popular spirit against the ancient thrones, he should be able to conquer it again under his soldierly and plebeian despotism.

The ennui, moreover, consequent upon his position, made him little scrupulous as to the means, and less timid as to the difficulties of the future. Idleness weighed upon him as upon a spirit which had long borne up the world, but now no longer bore anything but disappointment and regret. All risks and chances seemed to him preferable to this certainty of consuming himself in the full power and possession of his faculties in his island prison.

XI.

Napoleon had further learned, that the sovereigns assembled at Vienna and their ministers were beginning to feel uneasy, upon the hints of M. de Talleyrand, at the secret agitations which the near vicinity of Napoleon was spreading through France. A country humbled by conquest and eager to avenge itself for its humiliation, an army partly disbanded and partly under arms, whose heart was with its old general, a people easily inflamed with novelty, parties inconsistent in their principles, and the frequent communications between Elba and Paris, were all subjects which preoccupied the congress. England began to speak of the necessity of removing Napoleon from France, and France from Napoleon, and some island in the ocean was sought for which might be easily watched and surrounded, and would therefore present a place of greater security for the banishment of this public danger. The Isle of Ponza presented itself in the Mediterranean, that of St. Helena in the Atlantic Ocean. These rumours, exaggerated by the reports of his confidants, made Napoleon apprehend that the concessions of Paris might be revoked, and his principality be converted into a prison, to which death itself would be preferable. Moreover, between power and death, there still remained for him all the chances of an invasion of the continent, and all the treaties which this invasion might force from the allied powers. Italy appeared to him as a second France, still easier perhaps to rouse to action, to conquer and to keep, than his first empire. He was of its blood, he spoke its language, he possessed its national genius, his name sounded there like a name of Tuscany, his brother

and his sister had reigned there; Murat, his brother-in-law, still actually did reign there, and might pave the way for him with an army of 60,000 men. Sometimes he returned to his views of founding a European empire in the East; he thought, and with reason, that a conqueror of his name, deified by distance and the imagination of the Arabs, at the head of some thousands of soldiers, and recruiting in Syria and in Egypt from populations as numerous as the sand of their deserts, might renew the prodigies of the Ten Thousand, and be Alexander in the East after having been Napoleon in the West. He had the fever of thought and the mute frenzy of adventure, which are the forerunners of great revolutions. A few but devoted emissaries arrived almost every week from the Italian coast under the pretext of commerce, and were closeted with him during whole nights, unknown even to his generals and his troops, stimulating by their own ardour the ardour by which he himself was devoured.

The Princess Pauline Borghese arrived from one of her tours to Naples, where she had seen Murat and had witnessed his protestations and tears of repentance. She acquainted the Emperor with the remorse of his old companion in arms, and his pressing entreaties, menaced as he was by the congress, that Napoleon would once more set his foot upon the continent, and by thus complicating the affairs of Europe, offer him a chance of preserving his own throne, an enterprise in which he even proposed to take the initiative. Murat, in fact, was not ignorant of the secret treaty signed at Vienna between England, Austria, and France to dethrone him. He knew that the army of 30,000 men, assembled under frivolous pretexts at Chambery, under Marshal Soult, had in reality no other object than Naples. He could no longer afford to dally with fortune.

XII.

Napoleon, on his side, only awaited the signal from Paris, and he received it. M. Fleury de Chaboulon, one of the young auditors of his council of state, whom he modelled to his own mind and formed to his hand to become the instru-

ments of his despotism, animated by that zeal which devoured the impatient ambition of the youth of that day, arrived under a specious pretext during the night, at the Isle of Elba, and was ushered into the presence of the Emperor. It is not known if this emissary had received the orders of Savary, Lavalette, or Maret, or if in his ardour he had acted on his own authority. However this may be, he opened his mind to the Emperor, and the Emperor half opened his in return He had occasion for instruments and precursors in France, but he apprehended spies of his designs even in these necessary instruments. His attitude and his language evinced the impatience and the prudence which were struggling in his breast, for he had hitherto only seen this young man in the obscure ranks of his council of state.

"Well, Sir," he said, when Marshal Bertrand had retired, "speak to me of Paris and of France; have you brought letters for me from my friends?" "No, your Majesty," replied the auditor. "Oh, then, I see they have forgotten me like the rest!" answered the Emperor, to make his visitor believe that he had no correspondence with the continent. "You will never be forgotten in France, Sire," said the emissary. "Never!" returned Napoleon. "You are mistaken; the French have now another sovereign; their duty and their happiness command them to think no more of me. What do they think of me at Paris? They invent a great many fables and falsehoods there; sometimes they say I am mad, sometimes that I am sick. It is also said that I am to be transferred to Malta or to St. Helena. Let them think of it! I have provisions for six months, cannons and brave men to defend me, and I shall make them pay dearly for their shameful attempt. But I cannot believe that Europe will dishonour itself by arming against a single man, who neither can nor wishes to do harm. The Emperor Alexander loves glory too much to consent to such an attempt. They have guaranteed to me, by a solemn treaty, the sovereignty of the Isle of Elba. I am here in my own territory, and so long as I shall not go to seek a quarrel with my neighbours, no one has any right to come and disturb me here. Have I known you in the army? Poor men!

expose your lives for kings, sacrifice to them your youth, your repose, your happiness, in order that they may not even know whether they have seen you or not! How do the Bourbons take in France?" "They have not realized the hopes that were entertained of them," said the emissary. "So much the worse," replied the Emperor; "I also thought when I abdicated, that the Bourbons, instructed and corrected by misfortune, would not fall back into those faults which lost them in 1789. I was in hopes that the King would govern you as a good man should; it was the only means of making you forget that he had been forced upon you by foreigners. But since they have set their feet upon the soil of France again, they have done nothing but commit blunders. Their treaty of the 23rd of April," he continued, raising his voice, "has profoundly disgusted me. With a single stroke of the pen they have robbed France of Belgium, and of the territory she had acquired during the Revolution; they have despoiled her of the arsenals, the fleets, the dockyards, the artillery, and the immense stores which I had accumulated in the forts and harbours, which they have delivered up. It was Talleyrand who made them commit this infamy. He must have been bribed to it. Peace is easily obtained on such terms; and if, like them, I had consented to sign the ruin of France, they would not now be on my throne. But I would sooner," he energetically cried, "cut off my hand! I preferred renouncing the throne rather than keep it at the expense of my own glory and the honour of France. A dishonoured crown is a fearful burthen. My enemies have everywhere declared that I obstinately refused to make peace; they have represented me as a wretched madman, thirsting for blood and carnage. This language suited their purpose. When a man wishes to kill his dog he would fain make people believe he is mad. But Europe shall know the truth, for I will acquaint it with everything that was said and done at Chatillon. I will unmask with a vigorous hand the English, the Russians, and the Austrians; and Europe shall decide between us. She will declare on which side lay the knavery and the thirst for shedding blood. If I had been possessed of a rage for war, I might have retired

with my army behind the Loire, and enjoyed to my heart's content a mountain warfare, but it was never my wish to do so, for I was weary of carnage. My name alone, and the brave men who remained faithful to me, still made the allies tremble even in my capital. They offered me Italy as the price of my abdication, but I refused it; he who has reigned over France should never reign elsewhere. I chose Elba in preference, and they were but too happy to give it to me. This position suits me, for here I can watch over France and over the Bourbons. All that I have ever done has been for France; it was for her sake, and not for my own, that I wished to make her the first nation in the universe. My own glory is made, and my name will live as long as that of God himself. If I had only had my own person to think of, I should rather, in abdicating the throne, have returned into the ordinary ranks of life; but it was my duty to preserve the title of Emperor for my family and for my son. After France, my son is dearest to me in all the world.

"The emigrants know my thoughts, and would gladly assassinate me. Every day I discover new snares and fresh plots. They have sent one of George's bravos to Corsica, a wretch whom even the English journals have held up to Europe as a thirster after blood, and a hired assassin. But let him beware; if I escape him, he shall at least not escape me; I shall send my grenadiers in search of him, and have him shot as a warning to others. The emigrants will ever be the same. When they had nothing to do but to make bows in my antechamber, I found more than I wanted of them; but when honourable deeds were called for, they ran away like poltroons. I committed a great error in recalling to France this antinational race. But for me, they would all have starved in foreign lands. But then I had great motives: I wished to reconcile Europe with us, and close the Revolution.

"What do the soldiers say of me?" "They never pronounce your name without respect, admiration, and sorrow." "They love me then still? What do they say of our misfortunes?" "They regard them as the effect of treason." "They are right. Were it not for the infamous defection of the Duke de

Ragusa, the allies were lost. I was master of their rear and of all their military resources. Not one would have escaped. They also would have had their twenty-ninth bulletin. Marmont is a wretch; he has lost his country and betrayed his sovereign. His convention with Schwartzenberg is of itself sufficient to dishonour him. If he had not been conscious that he was compromising himself in delivering me and my army into the hands of the enemy, he would have had no occasion to stipulate a safeguard for my life and liberty. But this is not his only treason; he intrigued with Talleyrand to wrest the regency from the Empress and the crown from my son. He infamously deceived and trifled with Caulaincourt, Macdonald, and the other marshals. Every drop of his blood would not suffice to expiate the mischief he has done to France. I shall consign his name to the execration of posterity. I am very glad to hear that my army has preserved the consciousness of its superiority, and that it attributes our great misfortunes to their real authors. I see with satisfaction, from what you have acquainted me with, that the opinion I had formed of the state of France is correct; the Bourbon race is no longer in a position to govern. Their reign may suit the nobles, the priests, and the old dowagers of yore, but is utterly worthless for the present generation. The people have been habituated by the Revolution to count for something in the State; they will never consent to revert to their old nullity, and to become once more the mere drudges of the nobility and the church. The army will never be attached to the Bourbons. Our victories and our misfortunes have established between it and me an indestructible tie. With me alone it may once more achieve vengeance, power, and glory; with the Bourbons it can obtain nothing but blows and insults. Kings can only maintain themselves by the love of their people or by fear: the Bourbons are neither loved nor dreaded; they will of themselves forfeit the throne, but they may still maintain themselves long upon it. The French do not know how to conspire.

"Yes, all men who have national blood in their veins must be the enemies of their government. But how is it all to end? Is it thought there will be a fresh Revolution? What

would you do were you to drive away the Bourbons? Would you establish the Republic?" "The Republic, Sire! Nobody dreams of that. Perhaps a regency might be established." "A regency! For what purpose? Am I dead?" "But, Sire, your absence." "My absence has nothing to do with it. In two days I should be in France if the nation called me thither. Do you think I should be right in coming back?" "I dare not, Sire, personally determine such a question, but—" "That is not what I ask you. Reply, yes or no." "Well then, yes, Sire." "You think so?" "Yes, your Majesty; I am convinced in common with your friends, that the people and the army would receive you as a liberator, and would embrace your cause with enthusiasm." "My friends then are of opinion that I should return?" "We had foreseen that your Majesty would interrogate me upon this point, and this is verbatim the answer: 'You will say to the Emperor that you dare not take upon yourself to decide a question of so much importance, but that he may consider as a positive and indisputable fact, that the present government has lost itself in the estimation of the people and the army; that discontent is at its height, and that it is not thought the Bourbons can make head much longer against the general animadversion. You will add, that the Emperor has become the object of the regrets and wishes of the army and of the nation.'"

XIII.

The Emperor appeared to listen for the first time to this report of an intelligent man on the state of France; he then became absorbed in his reflections and dismissed his visitor.

Two days after he sent for him again, and after having sworn him to the strictest secrecy as to what he was about to confide to him: "Henceforward," he said, "you belong to me; finish and state circumstantially the account you have been commissioned to make to me of the state of feeling in France. I have been the cause of its misfortunes, and I wish to repair them. Murat is with us. He has recovered his noble heart, he bewails the wrongs he has done me and is

ready to atone for them. He has a poor head; he has nothing but an arm and a heart. His wife shall guide him. He will lend me his navy if I should have occasion for it. France calls upon me. Depart, and tell those who have sent you what you have seen. I am determined to brave everything, to comply with their wishes and those of the nation. I shall leave here between this and the 1st of April with my guard, and perhaps sooner. Let them strengthen the good feeling of the army. Should the fall of the Bourbons precede my arrival, tell my friends that I desire no regency; let them appoint a government *ad interim*, composed of the persons whose names I shall mention to you. With regard to yourself, you are to go to Naples and thence to Paris. This evening, at nine o'clock, you will find a guide and horses at the town gates. At midnight, a felucca, got in readiness unknown to the commandant of Porto Longone, will carry you to Naples."

Then recalling his emissary, who was retiring: "What are the regiments," he said, "which are quartered in the South, on the coast, and on the road to Paris? Write me the names of the officers who command them. Here is a cipher that will screen your communications from the eyes of all police."

XIV.

The emissary departed and executed the orders of Napoleon, waiting patiently the 1st of April as the period fixed by the Emperor, while the secret council of Bonapartists at Paris concealed in anxious silence their hopes and fears. No one was in possession of the explicit secret of his final resolves. He left them floating in his own mind. He thought with reason that great events are determined rather by the hour than by the man, and that they are as frequently unexpected as premeditated. He was wont to leave much to be done by chance and the moment.

XV.

Meanwhile an unaccustomed activity and mysterious symptoms of some great design attracted the notice of the inhabitants

of Elba. Feluccas were incessantly arriving and departing by night with correspondence to and from Italy. Provisions and munitions of war were accumulated in the magazines. Frequent reviews of the grenadiers of the guard were made by Napoleon, and by his generals; the arms were inspected, and a rumour was current among the soldiers of an approaching expedition to Italy. They were delighted at the idea of soon seeing Italy again, confiding in the genius and good fortune of their Emperor, and having no doubt of victory the moment he should give them the signal of some enterprize contemplated and planned by him. His smiling countenance, familiar talk, and rough caresses, prepared them, without any revelations on his part, to do everything and hope everything for him and them. From the eyes of the strangers who visited the island, and amongst whom he suspected there were spies, Napoleon concealed his intentions under the appearance of a resigned indifference, and the aimless activity of a man who endeavours to dissipate his ennui. Reunions, conversazione, and fêtes multiplied around him The English and French commissioners charged with observing from Leghorn and Genoa the coast of Italy, came over themselves to participate in these pleasures, and kept their governments in the most deceitful security.

XVI.

Whether the Emperor had wished to deceive his friends themselves by naming the 1st of April for his projected expedition, or whether an impatience consonant with his nature had not seized upon him suddenly and rendered intolerable the long delay which he had at first imposed upon his wishes, certain it was that he surprised Europe, and perhaps himself, by suddenly *anticipating the prescribed term. He knew that* schemes too long delayed miscarry, and that in conspiracies wonder is an element of success.

On the evening of the 26th of February, he attended with a serene brow, a mind apparently relaxed, and conversation free and buoyant, a ball given by the Princess Pauline Borghese to the officers of his army, to the strangers, and to the prin

cipal inhabitants of the island. He chatted for a long time on various topics with some English travellers, whom curiosity had brought over to this fête from the continent. He left the ball-room at a late hour, taking with him only General Bertrand and General Drouot. "We depart to-morrow," he said to them in that tone of voice which seems to forbid discussion and command silent obedience; "let the vessels which are at anchor be seized to-night; let the commander of the brig *Inconstant* be ordered on board to take the command of my flotilla, and to prepare everything for the embarkation of the troops; let my guards be embarked in the course of to-morrow; let no vessel whatever leave the port or the creeks until we are at sea, and until that time let no one, except yourselves, be acquainted with my intentions."

The two generals passed the remainder of the night in preparing for the execution of the orders they had received. The fête of the Princess Pauline had hardly ceased to resound amid the silence of night, when the projects of the Emperor had already crossed the sea, and everything was getting ready for his actual departure. At sunrise, the officers and soldiers received without astonishment or hesitation, the order to prepare for embarkation. They were accustomed never to reason on points of obedience, and to confide in the name which for them was destiny At mid-day the lanch of the brig *Inconstant* came to shore for the Emperor himself, and he stepped in under a salute from the cannon, and amidst the acclamations of the people and the tears of his sister. He was received on board the brig by 400 grenadiers of his guard, already embarked. Three small merchant vessels, seized during the night, had embarked the remainder of the troops, amounting altogether to 1,000 men. Napoleon's features were lit up with the certainty of success, and this confidence speedily communicated itself to the countenance of his soldiers. The sea was propitious to him. It had seconded him in all his enterprises, had borne him from Corsica to France, from Toulon to Malta and Alexandria, separating from him the fleet of Nelson, and again it bore him back from Alexandria to Fréjus, through the midst of the English cruisers In returning from Egypt

alone, and a deserter from his army, he came at the call of his fortune; in embarking at the island of Elba with all that remained of him and of his companions in glory, he came to provoke it. He still depended upon it, and as yet he was not destined to be deceived.

XVII.

The channel between the Isle of Elba and the shores of the continent ought to have been studded by French and English cruisers to observe the captive of Europe. France had neglected this precaution, and the commander of the English cruiser, distracted, between love and duty, had left his frigate at anchor in the roadstead of Leghorn, and had gone to Florence to attend fêtes, where he had hoped to meet a lady celebrated for her beauty, the object of his passion. The sea was therefore free, and at sunset the last gun gave the signal to the flotilla of Napoleon to weigh anchor. A cloudless sky, a gentle swell, and a light favourable breeze seemed to conspire in unison with this handful of men, who were going in search of empire or to death beyond the waves. The music of the military band replied by martial flourishes to the adieus from the shore; and ere the night was far advanced, the fleet and the music had vanished together. "The die is cast!" exclaimed Napoleon, as he turned away his eyes from the mountains of the island, which were sinking below the horizon, and rested them on the sea of Italy. He called his generals around him, and with them reviewed the troops embarked in the expedition. The 400 grenadiers on board the *Inconstant*, 200 infantry of the guard, 200 Corsican light infantry, and 100 Poles, embarked in six small vessels of every tonnage, with twenty-six pieces of cannon on board the brig, composed the whole fleet and army. A single frigate which they might have encountered would have been sufficient to annihilate it, but no one calculated the peril, for all expected prodigies. Bertrand, Drouot, and Cambronne, presented to the soldiers the same calmness of voice, and the same disciplined aspect, as in those days when they surrounded the Emperor at his reviews of the

Carrousel. The soldiers bore on their features and in their eyes, somewhat of the resolution of days of battle, their mental vision seeming to view from afar the great mind which led them on. They respectfully studied the attitudes and words of their Emperor, but no one ventured to interrogate him as to his designs. Their noblest devotion was to follow him unquestioned.

XVIII.

But Napoleon penetrating their secret thoughts, and willing to associate them by confidence with his success, exclaimed, "Soldiers! we are going to France; we are going to Paris." "To France! to France!" with one voice replied the 400 grenadiers grouped together upon the deck of the brig. "Vive la France! Vive l'Empereur!"

The Emperor went down between decks, and the soldiers, who wore the same uniforms which time and the campaign of 1814 had used and torn, occupied themselves in patching and readjusting the remnants, for they wished to show themselves again in their native land in the garb of their parade days. They exchanged with each other in an under-tone those unstudied reflections, those homeward thoughts and light and ironical railleries which constitute the genius of the French camp. Napoleon availed himself of these nocturnal hours to dictate to his generals the proclamations to the army and to the people, which he wished to precede him on the route to Paris. He had drawn up and carefully written out himself these proclamations at once military and political, the crowning point and principal medium of his enterprise; he had maturely weighed every word; but not wishing to confide to any secretary, or to any confidant, the mystery of his project, he had written these documents with his own hand. It was with difficulty he could read his own writing, rapid, mutilated, confused as the thought which accumulates upon thought in a rapid jumble of ideas. He could scarcely make out again either the words or the sense of what he had put upon paper, but he succeeded at length in deciphering his scratches and hieroglyphics. Several hands wrote from his

dictation. He commenced with the army, always and in all places, foremost in his thoughts.

"TO THE ARMY.

"Soldiers! We have not been conquered; two men from our own ranks have betrayed our laurels, their country, their sovereign, their benefactor.

"They whom we have seen during five-and-twenty years overrunning all Europe to raise up enemies against us, who have passed their lives in fighting against us in the ranks of foreign armies, while they cursed our beautiful France, would they pretend to command and enchain our eagles, they who have never been able to support their fiery glance? Shall we suffer them to inherit the fruits of our glorious labours—seize upon our honours and estates, that they may calumniate our glory? If their reign were to continue all would be lost, even the memory of our glorious days.

"With what frantic rage do they misrepresent them! They seek to poison what the world admires; and if there still remain any defenders of our glory, they will be found among those very enemies that we have fought upon the battle-field.

"Soldiers! in my exile I have heard your voice, and I am come through every obstacle and every peril.

"Your general, called to the throne by the choice of the people, and raised on your shields, is restored to you; come and join him.

"Fling away those colours which the nation has prescribed, and which for five-and-twenty years have served as a rallying point to the enemies of France, and hoist the tri-colour cockade which you have worn in our glorious battles. We must forget that we have been the masters of nations, but we ought not to suffer any stranger to meddle with our affairs. Who would pretend to be master over us? Who would have the power to be? Take back those eagles that you had at Ulm, at Austerlitz, at Jena, at Eylau, at Wagram, at Friedland, at Tudela, at Eckmühl, at Essling, at Smolensk, at the Moskowa, at Lutzen, at Wurtchen, at Montmirail. Do you imagine that

this handful of Frenchmen, just now so arrogant, can stand their threatening glance? They will return whence they came, and there, if they will, they may reign as they pretend to have reigned during nineteen years.

"Your property, your rank, your glory, the property, the rank and the glory of your children, have not greater enemies than these princes whom foreigners have imposed upon us. They are the enemies of our glory, since the recital of so many heroic actions, which have rendered the French people illustrious while fighting against them to shake off their yoke, is their condemnation.

"The veterans of the army of Sambre-et-Meuse, of the Rhine, of Italy, of Egypt, of the West, of the Grand Army, are humbled; their honourable wounds are stigmatised, their successes are crimes. These brave men would all be rebels, if, as the enemies of the people pretend, legitimate sovereigns were only to be found in the midst of foreign armies. Honours, rewards and partiality are only for those who have served them against the country and us.

"Soldiers! come and range yourselves under the standard of your chief; he exists only in your welfare; his rights are only those of the people and yours; his interest, his honour and his glory are identical with yours. Victory will advance with rapid strides; the eagle with the national colours will fly from steeple to steeple, even to the towers of Notre Dame. Then you may exhibit your wounds with honour, then you may boast of what you have done, for you will be the liberators of your country.

"In your old age, surrounded and esteemed by your fellow-citizens, they will listen respectfully while you recount your noble deeds. You may then say with pride: 'And I also formed part of that grand army, which twice penetrated the walls of Vienna, and those of Rome, of Berlin, of Madrid, and of Moscow; which delivered Paris from the pollution with which treason and the presence of the enemy had contaminated it.' Honour to these brave soldiers, the glory of their country! and eternal shame to those criminal French, in whatever rank they may have been born, who, for five-and-

twenty years, have fought in foreign ranks to rend the bosom of their country.

"(Signed) NAPOLEON.

"*The Grand Marshal officiating as Major-General of the Grand Army,*

"(Signed) BERTRAND."

In his proclamation which he addressed to the people may be found all the accusations and all the malignant criminations with which his Parisian friends for the last seven months had prompted the imperialist or revolutionary journals. After having for twenty years assumed the attitude of a patrician determined to subdue the people, he now played the part of the plebeian resolved to avenge the people on the aristocracy. A Sylla transformed into a Marius. But the world could not be deceived. The whole enterprise he was about to attempt and accomplish, displayed this double part of which one belied the other. Under the plebeian garb might be seen the restorer of all the aristocracies, and under that of the lover of freedom, the preserver of all dictatorships.

"TO THE PEOPLE

"Frenchmen! the defection of the Duke of Castiglione gave up Lyons defenceless into the hands of our enemies. The army which I had entrusted to his command was, from the number of its battalions and the bravery and patriotism of the troops which composed it, able to beat the Austrian main-body to which it was opposed, and to arrive in rear of the left flank of the enemy's army which threatened Paris.

"The victories of Champaubert, of Montmirail, of Chateau-Thierry, of Vauchamp, of Mormans, of Montereau, of Craonne, of Rheims, of Arcy-sur-Aube, and of St. Dizier; the insurrection of the brave peasants of Lorraine, of Champagne, of Alsace, of Franche-Comté, and of Burgundy, and the position which I had taken in the rear of the enemy's army, by separating it from its magazines, from its artillery of reserve, from its commissariat, and from all its baggage, had placed it in a desperate position. The French were never on the point of becoming more powerful, and the *élite* of the enemy's army

was lost without resource. It would have found a tomb in those vast districts which it had pitilessly plundered, when the treason of the Duke de Ragusa gave up the capital and disorganised the army. The unexpected conduct of these two generals who betrayed at the same moment their country, their sovereign, and their benefactor, changed the fate of the war. The situation of the enemy was such that, at the conclusion of the affair which took place before Paris, it was without ammunition, in consequence of being cut off from its artillery of reserve.

"In these new and extraordinary circumstances my heart was torn, but my soul remained unshaken. I consulted only the interest of the nation, and exiled myself upon a rock in the middle of the sea, for my life was, and still might be, useful to you. I did not suffer the great number of citizens who wished to accompany me, to share in my fate. I thought their presence at home would be useful to France, and I only took with me a handful of brave men necessary for my guard.

"Elevated by your choice to the throne, everything that has been done without you is illegal. For the last twenty-five years, France has been acquiring new interests, new institutions, and a new glory, which can only be guaranteed by a national government, and by a dynasty created under these new circumstances. A prince who would reign over you, who would be seated upon my throne by the power of the same armies which have ravaged our territory, would vainly endeavour to bolster himself up by the principles of feudal rights; he could only serve the honour and the rights of a few individuals, enemies of the people, who, for the last five-and-twenty years, have condemned them in all our national assemblies. Your internal tranquillity, and the estimation in which France is held abroad, would be lost for ever.

"Frenchmen! in my exile I have heard your complaints and your wishes; you claim the government of your choice, which alone is legitimate; you accused me of slumbering too long; you reproached me with sacrificing to my repose the great interests of the nation.

"I have crossed the seas amidst dangers of every descrip-

tion, and I am come amongst you to resume my rights, which are identical with yours. All that has been done, written, or said by individuals since the taking of Paris, I shall be ignorant of for ever. It shall have no influence whatever on the recollections I preserve of the important services they have rendered; for there are events of such a nature that they are beyond the control of human organization.

"Frenchmen! there is no nation, however small, which has not had the right of relieving itself, and has not actually relieved itself from the dishonour of obeying a prince imposed upon it by an enemy for a moment victorious. When Charles VII. re-entered Paris and overthrew the ephemeral throne of Henry VI., he acknowledged that he owed his sceptre to the bravery of his troops, and not to the Prince Regent of England. It is likewise to you alone and to my gallant army that I give, and ever shall give, the glory of being indebted for everything.

"(Signed) NAPOLEON."

His accent and his enthusiasm while he dictated these appeals to the people were in conformity with his words, and displayed the look, the gesture, and the indignant tone of one who declaims against the oppressors of liberty and equality. It might be said that he was rehearsing before his generals and his secretaries the popular scenes he was about to enact on the continent.

XIX.

A portion of the night was spent in this occupation; and the two proclamations were scarcely dictated, when all who knew how to write, amongst the sailors or grenadiers of the guard, were called upon deck, and some hundreds of hands were speedily occupied in making some thousands of copies of them to be ready for being distributed in profusion amongst the people at the moment of debarkation. The wind fell during the night, and at daybreak the flotilla was only six leagues from Elba, slowly doubling the Cape Saint André. The calm irritated Napoleon, who prayed for a morning breeze to throw him on the coast of France. The little desert isle of Capraia, frequented by the goat herds of Piombino, seemed to hold back

the brig. One or two sails were seen in the distance. Everything became an object of suspicion to a captive who had the world for his spy and his enemy. The officers of the vessel proposed to tack, and return to Porto Ferrajo, there to await a more favourable wind. The Emperor refused, and ordered the heavy equipments of his little army to be thrown overboard to lighten the vessels, and render them more sensible to the breeze.

A little wind sprang up towards noon, which enabled the flotilla to bear towards Leghorn, when a frigate appeared to leeward, but was soon out of sight. A French brig-of-war, the *Zephyr*, commanded by Captain Andrieux, soon after hove in sight, making all sail in the direction of the flotilla. The grenadiers, confident that they could either win over or capture this vessel, implored the Emperor to board her, to make her hoist the tri-coloured flag, and add her to his fleet. But, unwilling to risk the secret and possibly the entire success of his enterprise by a puerile and insignificant conquest, he ordered the grenadiers below, with instructions to conceal themselves, and to keep silence. At six o'clock the two brigs were within hail, crossing each other's track; and the two commanders, who were acquainted, exchanged some words through their speaking-trumpets. Captain Andrieux, without the least suspicion, asked for news of the Emperor, and Napoleon, who was leaning on his elbow beside the commander of the *Inconstant*, took the speaking-trumpet out of his hand, and replied that he was quite well. The different tacks they were on soon removed the brigs from each other. The breeze freshened till the following morning. At day-break a seventy-four gun ship became visible, steering towards the flotilla, the crews of which again became uneasy, but her sails soon furled out of sight, like a cloud upon the ocean; and she did not even condescend to notice these seven little merchant vessels scattered on the deep. Serenity returned with a clear horizon, and the Emperor again assembling his generals upon the deck, said to them: "Speak now yourselves to your companions in glory! Come, Bertrand, take the pen, and write your own appeal to your brothers in arms!" Bertrand excused himself

on the score of his inability to find expressions equal to the grandeur of the occasion. "Well then, write," said Napoleon; "I will speak for you all." He then dictated the address of the guard to the army:—

"Brother Soldiers! The drums are beating to arms, and we are on the march; come and join us, come and join your Emperor and your eagles!

"And if these men, just now so arrogant, who have always fled at the aspect of our arms, dare to meet us, where can we find a nobler occasion to shed our blood and to sing the hymn of victory?

"Soldiers of the seventh, eighth, and nineteenth military divisions—garrisons of Antibes, of Toulon, and of Marseilles!—disbanded officers and veterans of our armies—you are called by honour to give the first example. Come with us to win back the throne—the palladium of our rights—that posterity may one day exclaim: 'Foreigners, seconded by traitors, had imposed a shameful yoke upon France, but the brave arose, and the enemies of the people and the army have disappeared, and sunk into oblivion.'"

This address was copied like the others, by the soldiers and the sailors who could write, and each soldier received several copies of it, to distribute on the road to the French regiments.

XX.

The coast of Antibes appeared at length in sight, and was saluted with a general acclamation—"Vive la France, Vivent les Français," cried soldiers and sailors, waving their hats and caps in the air, as if their shouts and gestures had been seen and replied to by the horizon. "Let us display the tri-coloured cockade again," said the Emperor, "that the country may recognise us!" The cockade of Elba, white and amaranth coloured, and spangled with bees, was torn down and thrown into the sea, and every soldier replaced on his bear-skin cap the tri-coloured cockade, which all had preserved as a relic of the service. A peaceful night closed upon their sleepless eyes, and in the twilight of the morning of the 1st of March the flotilla, wafted

towards the land by a western breeze, entered the Gulf of Juan in full sail. Napoleon, superstitious, like all men who have experienced the miracles of destiny, associated a mysterious feeling with this coast; it was the shore that had received him on his furtive and triumphal return from Egypt; it had introduced him to the throne, and was destined, he said, to introduce him to it again, with greater certainty and rapidity; for on this occasion his destiny had less to achieve; knowing the way, it had merely to retrace, as it were, its former footsteps.

XXI.

The felucca, on board of which was General Drouot, was half-an-hour in advance of the flotilla, and was the first to anchor on a silent and deserted shore. Drouot and his soldiers were landed by the boats of the felucca, the land and sea being as yet only partially visible in the morning light Drouot's soldiers, on disembarking, and not knowing whether the other vessels were near or not, experienced a momentary panic as they beheld the shadow of the *Inconstant*, enlarged by the mist, advancing towards the shore. They believed in a snare, and thought they had been overtaken by some vessel of war, coming to intercept the Emperor on his way to land, and they instantly returned to the felucca to go to his assistance. But while they were unfurling their sails, the Emperor himself saluted them from the forecastle of the ship, and dispelled their groundless alarm. All the vessels now came to anchor; the troops landed without obstacle, and at five o'clock the Emperor himself touched once more the soil of France, carried upon the arms of his grenadiers, and received with their acclamations. His bivouac had been established at some distance from the beach, in an olive wood. "This is a lucky omen," he exclaimed, pointing to these symbols of peace, "and it will be realized."

XXII.

On the appearance of these vessels, the noise of the landing, the echo of the acclamations, and at the sight of these uniforms

dear to the recollections of the people, the doors of some scattered cottages in the neighbourhood were opened, and astonished and hesitating peasants timidly approached the camp of Napoleon. The soldiers received them with open arms, pointed out the Emperor to them, and invited them to fraternize. But the peasants displayed more hesitation and terror than enthusiasm; one alone, an old soldier, accosted the Emperor, and requested to be enrolled in his battalion. "He is the first," said Napoleon to his officers; "they will all follow, for their hearts are with me!" Though he affected confidence, however, he was evidently staggered by the slowness and indecision of the people of this coast in joining his standard. He was in France, and remained more isolated than he was in Elba.

He summoned an officer of the line, and ordered him to march at the head of a detachment of twenty-five men to the town of Antibes, which was near the shore where he had landed, to call upon the garrison and the people, in the name of the Emperor, to unfurl the tri-coloured flag there, and gain over the soldiers. The officer departed, full of confidence.

XXIII.

But the tidings of Napoleon's descent on the coast with a handful of men, had already been conveyed by some royalist peasants to General Corsin, commandant of Antibes. Without hesitating between his recollections and his duty, he took measures to cut off his troops from all contact with the emissaries of Napoleon. The detachment sent by the Emperor, instead of contenting itself with parleying outside the gates, boldly entered the town with cries of "Vive l'Empereur!" which only received for echo the cry of "Vive le Roi!" amongst the people, and coldness and silence from the garrison. General Corsin ordered the drawbridge to be suddenly raised behind the detachment, and both officers and men were detained as prisoners in the town. Napoleon thus commenced his enterprise with a reverse, and was foiled by his own soldiers. This, assuredly, was not the insurrectionary enthusiasm which his Parisian emissaries had so flatteringly portrayed to him.

But it was now too late for reflection; he must either advance or confess himself vanquished.

Meanwhile, his own soldiers murmured and blushed at leaving their comrades compromised, prisoners, and not unlikely to be executed, in the very first town whose loyalty they had put to the proof. They demanded with loud cries to go and deliver them by an attack on Antibes; but Napoleon, who felt the value of time, and who did not wish to lose hours, and perhaps days, at the gates of a town, the occupation of which would have no influence whatever on the fate of his enterprise, calmed their impatience by sending a second officer with a message to General Corsin. This officer was ordered not to enter the town, but to limit himself to treat with the garrison. "Tell them," said Napoleon to his emissary, "that I am here; that France recalls me; that the garrisons of Lyons and Grenoble are hastening rapidly to meet me; and that I summon them to come and range themselves beneath my eagles!"

The officer went and came back without having been able to execute his orders The gates were closed and the ramparts deserted. France was recoiling from Napoleon; but he feigned indifference to a symptom which inwardly dismayed him, and he resolved to gain by the rapidity of his movements that success which he had lost at the outset by the unpopularity of his name. He made his troops refresh themselves, broke up his camp, and commenced his march at eleven o'clock at night, with four pieces of artillery. The Poles of his guard nearly all dismounted, carried their saddles and accoutrements on their backs, and, according as Napoleon found horses on the road, he purchased them to supply his cavalry again.

With a view of avoiding the heart of Provence, and the large towns of Toulon, Marseilles, Aix, and Avignon, which he knew were attached to the Bourbons, and whose animosity towards himself he had experienced on his way to exile, he determined to follow the flank of the mountains on the left bank of the Rhone. He thus hoped to arrive at Grenoble and Lyons before Marshal Masséna, who commanded in the South, could reach him or stop his passage. He reached Cannes at daybreak, from thence to Grasse, and slept that night at the

village of Cernon, twenty leagues distant from the coast. The people of the places he had passed through, had everywhere evinced more surprise than enthusiasm at his appearance. On the 3rd he halted at Barême, on the 4th at Digne, on the 5th at Gap. The warlike populations of these mountainous districts began be to excited at his name. He encamped his little army outside the town, and only kept near his person, as a safeguard, six mounted Poles and fifty grenadiers. During the night he caused the proclamations he had dictated at sea to be printed; and it was sufficient to throw them to the people of Gap, to ensure their distribution from one place to another, on his route, and in the neighbouring districts. The magistrates of Gap, a town without a garrison, had retired before him; except the mayor of the place and some municipal councillors, who entered into communication with his troops to procure them provisions, but rigidly abstained from the slightest manifestation of enthusiasm or even of welcome. He attempted to deceive the inhabitants of Dauphiné, by the expression of a gratitude which he did not feel. "Citizens," he said in a proclamation, "I have been deeply penetrated by all the sentiments you have evinced for me. You are right in calling me your father; for I only live for the honour and happiness of France. My return dissipates your disquietude; it guarantees the preservation of all property, of equality between all classes; these rights, which you have enjoyed for twenty five years, and for which your forefathers have sighed so ardently, now form part of your existence." On the 6th at two o'clock in the afternoon he quitted Gap, amidst a concourse of people, more curious than eager to join him. He had not yet during five days march recruited a single man; the people flocked round him, gazed at him, were astonished, but followed not. Every one seemed to feel that Napoleon was encountering great hazards, and that there was, perhaps, more temerity than genius in his enterprise.

He stopped the same day at Corps. General Cambronne went with an advance guard of fifty men to occupy the village of La Mure. The mayor of Sisteron refused provisions, but they were furnished by the inhabitants themselves, who presented a tri-coloured flag to Cambronne's advanced-

guard. At some distance from the town the general found himself in front of a battalion sent from Grenoble to stop the Emperor's p ssage. Cambronne made a vain attempt to negociate with them, but was not listened to. He drew back, and sent one of his aides-de-camp to inform Napoleon of this obstacle. Napoleon rallied his troops, harassed by a long march in the snow and amongst the precipices of the lower Alps. Danger restored the strength and spirit of his soldiers. At their approach, the battalion of the 5th regiment of the line, and the two companies of sappers, which had opposed the passage of Cambronne, fell back three leagues upon a main body of troops of 6,000 men, detached from Chambery. This battalion halted in front of Vizille, at the entrance of a defile flanked by the mountains and a lake. Napoleon also halted, and passed the night at La Mure, where, however, he did not sleep; for the encounter or collision which must take place on the morrow between his little army and the royalist troops was to decide his existence. He, nevertheless, on quitting La Mure affected that confidence which, on the brow of a chief, is the augury of success. This success awaited him at Grenoble, but an army opposed his progress thither. To retrograde from Vizille was a virtual abandonment of the Empire; the conqueror would then be nothing more than the chief of a band of adventurers, compelled to fly towards the Alps, to seek an asylum amongst their snows and their precipices. He had not depended on chance alone for the decision of this march upon Grenoble. Trustworthy accomplices, few but important, were working on their side to facilitate his access to that place, and to open its gates at his approach.

XXIV.

The Emperor had sent from the coast of Antibes his surgeon Emery, to Grenoble, charged with letters and instructions; he was ordered to travel by the shortest roads and those least open to suspicion, and to give notice of the Emperor's march to a young man of that city, named Dumoulin. Dumoulin was a fanatic of military glory and plebeian patriotism, dauntless, active and intelligent, ready to undertake any and every thing, to elevate in

the person of the Emperor, the idol of his imagination; one of those characters, in short, which fortune ever bestows upon the genius of revolutions, to pave the way for the more deliberate audacity of those who undertake them. Dumoulin was devoured with disinterested zeal, and carried away by the whirlwind which he delighted in raising; he had the discretion of a conspirator, the cunning of a negociator, and the impetuosity of a Seid of the desert. In October 1814, he had been to see Bonaparte at Porto Ferrajo, and in his own enthusiastic devotion had given him a foreshadowing of that of the inhabitants of Grenoble. He offered his arms and his fortune to the Emperor who, on taking leave of him, said, "We shall see one another again." Thirty years after, Dumoulin, then bordering on old age, but grown young again in his recollections of Grenoble, was seen in the foremost ranks of the people, on the 24th February 1848, leaping in the tribune, as he would in an assault, to pass the Empire once more through the breach of the Republic.

XXV.

Emery was also the bearer of letters for Maret and for Labédoyère, a young colonel, whose regiment was at Grenoble, and whom correspondence more certain than chance had apparently designated to the Emperor as a man whose heart at least was an accomplice in his designs.

On quitting La Mure, the Emperor composed his vanguard of 100 picked men from that chosen body always under the orders of Cambronne. This general, on advancing towards a bridge at some distance from La Mure, found himself in front of a new battalion. The envoy he sent to them with signs of peace was driven back. The Emperor being informed of this, again dispatched one of his officers, Major Raoul, to attack the battalion which refused to open his route, but Raoul, threatened with their fire, returned without being heard. Napoleon felt that the moment had arrived to put to the test his own ascendancy over his old soldiers. He passed through his column, ordering it to halt, and rode forward at a gentle pace, almost alone, in advance of his army. The peasants, scattered about the fields

or lining the hedges on both sides of the road, seemed to remain neutral between the two causes, looking only on with the idle curiosity of the people at the daring combat of which they themselves are the prize. A few scattered cries of "Vive l'Empereur!" arose here and there among the groups of the populace, and some expressions in an under tone encouraged Napoleon to dare everything. It was one of those solemn crises in which a nation seems to withhold its respiration, not to interrupt by a single breath the undecided fiat of destiny on the point of being pronounced; when the balance of fate, about to incline for one of the two causes, must carry with it the whole world by the trifling weight of the slightest accident. A single cry may arouse a nation, a cold silence repel the boldest attempt, a chance ball from the musket of a soldier may crush an enterprise, together with the life of a great man, in whose heart it had been conceived.

Such at this moment was the mute and suspended situation of the two armies of Napoleon and the people.

XXVI.

But the Emperor at this imminent crisis was equal to his enterprise. The man so feeble on the 18th Brumaire, retreating disconcerted and almost fainting in the arms of his grenadiers—the man so perplexed at Fontainebleau before the insolence of his revolted marshals; the man since then so overcome and subdued at the Elyseé by the pressure of a few legislators and some traitors—was without effort or boasting a hero of *sang-froid* before the bayonets of the 5th regiment. Whether he had been assured by his accomplices at Grenoble that the hearts of this battalion beat in his favour; whether the habits of a soldier on the battle field had inured him to look on death with less repugnance by the fire than by the sword; or that his soul, since his departure from Elba, had concentrated all its powers in anticipation of this supreme moment, and that he had deemed that his enterprise was well worth the risk of life, certain it is that he did not hesitate a moment. He neither hastened or slackened his steps, but approached within a hundred

paces of the bayonets, which formed a wall before him on the road. There he dismounted, gave the reins to one of his Poles, crossed his arms on his breast, and advanced with measured steps like a man who marches to his death. It was the spectre of the imagination of both army and people appearing suddenly, and as if rising from the tomb, between France of the present and the past. He wore the costume in which recollection, legend, and picture had alike engraved him on the memory of all; the military hat, the green uniform of the light infantry of the guard, the over-coat of dust-coloured cloth, open and displaying his under dress, the high military boots, and spurs ringing on the ground; his attitude was that of reflection, which nothing can distract, or of peaceful command, which doubts not of obedience. He descended a slope of the road inclining towards the regiment he was about to accost. No groups of persons before him, beside him, or behind him, prevented him from being seen in all the illusion of his personal prestige: his figure standing out boldly and alone against the background of the high road, and the blue firmament beyond. To strike such a man, whom the soldiers recognised as their former idol, would have been in their eyes, not to fight, but to assassinate. Napoleon had calculated from afar this challenge of glory to humanity and to the heart of the French soldier, and he was not mistaken: but it required a profound genius to attempt, and a Napoleon to accomplish it. His grenadiers, at a great distance behind him, stood with their arms reversed, as a token of peace.

XXVII.

The officer commanding the 5th regiment, doing violence perhaps to his feelings in the execution of his duty, or knowing beforehand the resolution of his soldiers not to strike their Emperor, and only wishing to intimidate the army of Napoleon by an appearance of discipline, ordered his battalion to fire. The soldiers appeared to obey, and took aim at Napoleon, who, without stopping or betraying any emotion, advanced within ten steps of the muskets levelled at his breast, and elevating that-

spell-like and resounding voice, which had so often directed the manœuvres of the review, or of the field of battle, "Soldiers of the 5th regiment," he exclaimed, deliberately uncovering his breast, and presenting his naked bust to receive their fire, "if there is one amongst you who would kill his Emperor, let him do it. Here I am!"

XXVIII.

There was no reply; all remained silent and motionless. The soldiers had not even loaded their muskets, as if they distrusted themselves. Having gone through the semblance of obedience and fidelity to discipline, they thought they had done their duty, and that the heart might now be left to its own course.

And the hearts of all spoke with one voice. At first a thrill of feeling ran through the battalion, then a few muskets were lowered, then a greater number, and finally, the whole, while a cry of "Vive l'Empereur" issued from every mouth, which was replied to by a shout from the grenadiers of the guard, in the distance, of "Vive the 5th regiment of the line." Some of the officers quitted the ranks and took the road to Grenoble, that they might not be carried away by the emotion of their companies, while others wiped their eyes, sheathed their swords, and yielded to the general contagion. The soldiers quitting the ranks, rushed along with the people to surround the Emperor, who opened his arms to receive them; while his own faithful soldiers following the example, hastened to the spot, and mingled in one group and one acclamation with those of the 5th. It was the junction of France, past and present, embracing each other at the call of glory—the involuntary sedition of hearts. Napoleon had conquered by disarming himself; his name alone had done battle. From this moment France was re-conquered, the trial had been made, the example given. At a distance people might be faithful to duty, but when near, enthusiasm would seize on all; the example of the 5th regiment was worth more to the Emperor than the defection of ten armies.

XXIX.

An aide-de-camp of General Marchand, commandant of Grenoble, alone boldly protested against this defection, and endeavoured to bring back the soldiers to their duty. Some Poles of the Emperor's guard, who replaced about his person, and who equalled in fanaticism the Mamelukes he had brought from Egypt, galloped after the aide-de-camp, to punish him for his fidelity to his duty, but he escaped from them. The Emperor having good humouredly scolded the soldiers of the 5th, for having taken aim at him, they smiled, and sprung their ramrods to show that their muskets were unloaded.

The whole having formed a circle, the Emperor harangued the troops: "I have come," said he, "with only a handful of brave men, because I depend on the people and you. The throne of the Bourbons is illegitimate, since it has not been raised by the nation; it is contrary to the national will, since it is opposed to the interests of the country, and since it exists only for the benefit of a small number of noble families. Ask of your fathers, interrogate those brave peasants, and you will learn from their mouths the true situation of affairs. They are threatened with a renewal of the tithe system, of privileges, of feudal rights, and of all those abuses from which your victories had delivered them."

XXX

The two battalions thus united, resumed the route to Grenoble, the 5th regiment acting as a vanguard to the grenadiers of Napoleon; the defection just accomplished thus serving as an example to future defection. A major named Rey, sent by the conspirators of Grenoble to Napoleon, met the Emperor at a short distance from La Mure. He satisfied him thoroughly as to the army of Chambery, and the army of Grenoble, which Soult had concentrated on his route. "You have no occasion for arms," said the emissary; "your riding-whip will be sufficient to scatter all resistance before you; the hearts of the soldiers are everywhere your own."

In presenting himself in the name of the Revolution, Napoleon was quite sure of winning the hearts of the people in that group of the mountains of Dauphiné, from which the Revolution sprang in 1789. Vizille, one of the principal mouths of this volcano of liberty and equality, awaited him as a restorator of the people, and he entered it in triumph, amidst the rural population, intoxicated with joy at his name. They forgot his long tyranny whilst thus borrowing his arm against the Restoration, in the hope of enchaining it hereafter. Napoleon accepted as a provisional assistance to his cause, but reluctantly, these acclamations, in which the name of the Revolution was for the first time mixed up with his own. From Vizille, a vanguard of the people preceded the Emperor to the walls of Grenoble, and the shouts and enthusiasm of this crowd penetrated into the town and the barracks, and corrupted before hand the fidelity of the troops. The adjutant of the 7th regiment, commanded by Labédoyère, accosted Napoleon during the halt at Vizille, and informed him that this colonel had left Grenoble at the head of his regiment, not to fight, but to reinforce him.

XXXI.

The Emperor did not wish to let this flame of enthusiasm subside, which preceded and devoured everything in his passage. At nightfall he resumed his march on Grenoble; he reckoned upon the night and the confusion to induce that city to pronounce in his favour. It was already eluding the grasp of General Marchand, who commanded there.

Six thousand men were assembled in this fortified place, which commands the valley of Chambery and of Lyons, and the passage of the Rhone, and which the Emperor could not with safety leave behind him, without exposing him self to be pursued and crushed while he was summoning Lyons. The keys of Grenoble were the keys of France. Vienne, Valence and Chambery had there concentrated their forces, but these troops, demoralized by the rumour of the defection of the 5th regiment of the line at La Mure, and by the revolutionary spirit of Dauphiné, offered no substantial

support to the royal authorities. The cry of "Vive l'Empereur," which was resounding since morning in the streets, began to issue even from the barracks. The people made the soldiers swear that they would not fire upon their brothers in arms. The officers alone, resisting from a sense of honour the general seduction, endeavoured to restrain their troops, but towards mid-day no other hope was left them but flight, that they themselves might escape the contagion. The 4th regiment was brought by their colonel by the route of Chambery; Labédoyère conducted his by the route of Vizille. Whether he had prepared for his defection beforehand, or that the mute conspiracy of his soldiers had anticipated the event, certain it is that the tri-coloured cockades were concealed in their bosoms and in the drums.

Between Grenoble and Vizille, the Emperor heard at his vanguard loud and long acclamations breaking out during the night. These issued from the country people in the neighbourhood of Grenoble, who were escorting the regiment of Labédoyère, themselves won over and winning over others. This scene was illuminated by torches, and the young colonel throwing himself into the arms of the Emperor, offered him his own services and those of his regiment; then, as if he had already felt remorse for his enthusiasm and inward reproach for his fault, he endeavoured, at least, to render it servicable to the cause of liberty, and spoke as a man who makes conditions for his country, while handing it over to a master. The Emperor, without paying much attention to the impetuous words of Labédoyère, so strange to his ear, received him like one not disposed to barter for the conditions of the Empire. Everything is pardoned in an accomplice, when universal power is the prize of the complicity. Dumoulin a few moments afterwards also hastened to meet the Emperor, and offered him 100,000 francs and his life.

This active partisan, to whom Bonaparte had confidentially imparted his return, had sent an express to the Duke of Bassano at Paris with dispatches from the Emperor, had privately printed his three proclamations, dictated at sea; acquainted Labédoyère with the event, and had conferred

with MM. Chanvion, Fournier, Renaud, Boissonnet, Béranger, and Champollion Figeac, active propagators of the enthusiasm that was springing up at Grenoble. Napoleon gave him a captain's commission, and decorated him with his own hands with the cross of the Legion of Honour. On the night of his arrival, he admitted him also to a private interview, in which he who was going for the second time to ascend the throne of France, chatted with M. de Champollion Figeac of his souvenirs of Egypt, and of the fourteen dynasties which slept beneath the pyramids.

XXXII.

Already the torches which lit up the march of the army and its nocturnal triumphs were seen from the ramparts of Grenoble; and the clamours of this armed and unarmed multitude even reached the ears of the prefect and the general The latter had now nothing more to defend the town with than the walls and the gates, which he had ordered to be closed. Napoleon had resolved not to force them in any other manner than by the pressure of the multitude which surrounded him. Some battalions, still faithful, but hesitating and motionless, were drawn up on the ramparts, while the patriotic songs, the incitements of the people, and of their comrades of the 5th and 7th regiments, and the entreaties of Labédoyère and Dumoulin, were ringing in their ears. The keys of the gates had been taken to the general's quarters, but the people within responded to those without by cries of impatience and encouragement to force an entrance. The grenadiers of Elba were under the walls with shouldered arms, and Labédoyère's sappers advanced to blow open the gates, but the Emperor stopped them, not wishing that any material violence should stamp his victory with the appearance and odium of a siege. The people of the city, on hearing this decision, burst open the gates themselves, and laid the iron work and fragments of them in homage at the feet of Napoleon.

The Emperor entered the city by the light of torches through this voluntary breach at the same time that General Marchand

and the royal authorities were quitting it in the dark, and in a state of consternation, by the Lyons gate. Crowds of people bore Napoleon to his quarters in an inn of the city, kept by one of the veterans of his army; and the whole night was one continued acclamation under his windows: the people and the soldiers, confounded together in the same fault and the same delirium, fraternised together till daylight in banquets and embraces.

XXXIII.

"All is settled now," cried Napoleon, resting his harassed mind for the first time since his arrival from Elba "All is settled, and we are at Paris."

Grenoble, in fact, furnished with the immense stores of an army communicating with Chambery, where the same defection prevailed amongst the 8,000 troops assembled there against Murat, supported by Savoy and Italy, defended from La Provence by defiles easily closed in his rear, bordering on Lyons and the departments of the Loire and the east, where his cause might be recruited in case of need amongst thoroughly martial populations, were bases of operations just made for a civil war, and formidable to any army the Bourbons might assemble at Lyons. All the hazards of the enterprise were passed, and the rest now depended on policy and the genius of arms, of which the Emperor possessed sufficient to wrestle with superiority against all the generals formed under him whom the King could oppose to his progress.

He gave himself up at leisure to the contemplation of these prospects, and rested his army for twenty-four hours at Grenoble. The day after his arrival, he received all the authorities and all the members of the constituted bodies in the city and its environs, who, through submission, through sympathy, or through terror, came to salute, in him, the conqueror. He reviewed the troops of the garrison, and incorporating them with his own army, he marched them the same evening as a vanguard on the road to Lyons. Their defection constituted an example which he wished to precede him, that it might remove beforehand every encouragement and every pretext for

resistance. The report of all Provence traversed, and of the fall of Grenoble, ought to shake Lyons, and Lyons in submission, the route to Paris lay open before him.

He marched out of Grenoble as he had entered it, surrounded by his sacred battalion of the Isle of Elba, and pressed on every side by the waves of a multitude which cleared a road for him. The peasants of this part of Dauphiné, a lively, enthusiastic, and warlike people, bordering on the frontiers, and fond of the military, suffered themselves to be carried away by this martial current which bore the Emperor towards Lyons. He slept in the little town at Bourgoing, half way between Grenoble and Lyons. The town and large square of Bourgoing presented the whole night the spectacle of the tumult, the fires, and the songs of a bivouac of people and of soldiers intoxicated with joy at bringing back their idol and imposing him on the country. Sedition revealed itself under the eyes of discipline. The Emperor, a witness of this scene, blushed at an ovation which cost so much to his own dignity and the morality of this army; but he had occasion for this dangerous ebullition of plebeians and pretorians, which he proposed to curb at a future period. Meanwhile he smiled at the liberties taken by the multitude, amongst whom familiarity weakened respect.

Lyons was now before his eyes; and in this great city it was that the government had concentrated all its hopes and all its forces. Lyons, in its opinion, must judge the cause, and serve as an example to Paris. If its walls should prove the rock against which the enterprise of Napoleon was to be split, he had no other resource than to fall back upon the Alps, and turn his invasion upon Italy. There Austria waited, and France would follow him, and the plains of Marengo, the cradle of his power and his fame, would prove the tomb of his crime and of his madness.

Let us now go back to the day when the unexpected descent of Napoleon on the coast of Antibes became known at Vienna and at Paris, and to the circumstances coincident with this event.

XXXIV.

Louis XVIII. was the first who received the intelligence. A dispatch from Marshal Massena, who commanded in the South, sent by a courier to Lyons, and transmitted to Paris by telegraph, announced the debarkation of Bonaparte on the 1st of March, near Cannes, with 1,200 men and four pieces of cannon; that he had followed the route to Grenoble by the foot of the mountains; that all the requisite military measures had been taken to arrest him; that public opinion was unanimous against this armed attempt on the country, and that tranquillity reigned everywhere, except on his immediate line of march.

The King read this without betraying, either in looks or voice, the slightest emotion unworthy of the throne. He summoned Marshal Soult, minister-of-war, who, accustomed to look upon the art of war with the eye of a professional man, and not as an adventurer, could not believe in the reality of a descent upon and invasion of a country supported solely by a handful of men against an army and a nation. He was at first incredulous, then confident, but became answerable to the King for the result, whatever might be the nature of the case. The King, more distrustful, more politic, and more accustomed to the strange and sudden vicissitudes of fate, displayed an equal degree of calmness, but more penetration and foresight. He had misgivings, and said to the marshal, that this apparent madness of a debarkation with forces so unequal to the enterprise, must conceal some threatening plot with accomplices in the army and in Paris, and that the first requisite for defeating such a danger was to believe in its existence.

The council of ministers assembled. The King summoned to it his brother the Count d'Artois, and the Duke de Berry M. de Blacas and M. d'André treated the enterprise of Napoleon as the act of a madman. They even went so far as to felicitate the King upon an attempt which displayed neither capacity nor likelihood of success, and was nothing more than

the impatience of fallen ambition, which would at length deliver the conspirator and his cause to the contempt of Europe, and in the hands of the Bourbons. "The public voice," they said, "was at this moment unanimously raised against so audacious a proceeding. Peace, still recent and dear to all, was only disturbed by this one man, who, in all societies, was regarded as a public enemy." In spite of all this, however, the King persisted in treating seriously and vigorously this invasion of the enemy of his race. He instantly decided that troops should be concentrated at Grenoble and Lyons; that another army should be formed in Franche-Comté, to close up against Napoleon all the routes to Paris; that a third army should cover the South, and that La Vendee, summoned to the war, should rise to a man under the standard of its ancient cause. The Count d'Artois, as the heir and person chiefly interested in the throne, received the command of the principal army at Lyons; the Duke de Berry that of the army of Franche-Comté; the Duke d'Angoulême, who was then at Bordeaux, the command of a corps of 12,000 men, assembled at Nismes, to take Napoleon in flank and in rear, if he ventured upon the Rhône; finally, the Duke de Bourbon, son of the Prince of Condé, received the command of Brittany. The presence of all these chiefs of the Bourbon dynasty at the head of armies, and in the very hearts of the different populations, ought, according to the council of ministers, to counteract every thought of defection on the part of the troops, and all adhesion of the fickle populace to the bands of the Emperor. Illustrious and consummate generals were placed by Marshal Soult under the orders of these princes to direct their inexperience, and to exhibit to the soldiers an example of fidelity. Marshal Macdonald, faithful to Napoleon at Fontainebleau, and faithful to Napoleon's enemies when he had once sworn to serve them, received orders to command at Lyons for the Count d'Artois.

XXXV.

One prince only remained at Paris; this was the Duke d'Orleans. Popular from a vague character of opposition, indul-

gent towards the most fanatical of the Bonapartist generals, seeking and receiving popularity from all sources, this prince, already suspected by the Bourbon branch in possession of the throne, was not sufficiently relied upon to be entrusted with a special command of troops. It was apprehended that he would exhibit either too much weakness towards the common enemy, or too lively a recollection of the wars of the Republic, and of the tri coloured flag. A man still more penetrating, M de Vitrolles, felt that this prince would be equally embarrassing at Paris, in case of any commotion in the capital, as he would be dangerous in an army of his own. He still further deemed that it would be wise to employ this suspicious popularity in the interest of the common cause, and to compromise it at least with the partisans of Bonaparte, by forcing it to operate against them. This advice of M. de Vitrolles was adopted, and the Duke d'Orleans was invited to accompany the Count d'Artois to Lyons.

XXXVI.

This prince saw through the distrust that lurked beneath the apparent confidence which removed him from Paris, and which made him subordinate to the Count d'Artois. He recognised the snare that lay in a command which would place him in front of Napoleon, and compel him to choose between the favour of the Bonapartists and his duty as a prince of the blood. He would willingly have hesitated, for the natural and instinctive part he had to play was to appear as the moderator and umpire between the three opinions which divided France. A military man with the officers of Bonaparte's staff, a man of liberty with the republicans, and a man of legitimate monarchy with the royalists, he affected too much the secret favours of both oppositions to be entirely ignorant of what might attach to his name, in the possible contingencies of military conspiracies and republican prospects. He did not conspire, but he had already an eye to the favours of future revolutions; he was irreproachable in his acts, honest in his heart, but of an ambiguous mind. He felt, however, that it was now necessary to

declare himself, and he declared himself accordingly for the party whose summons was the most immediate—for the King and royal family. He repaired to the Tuileries, and hinted to Louis XVIII. that he could be more useful in Paris, or at the head of an army, than at Lyons. But perceiving that the matter was decided at court, he devoted himself with boundless zeal to the part which had been imposed upon him. He unbosomed himself to the King, and revealed to him the treacherous insinuations which the parties hostile to the reigning family had addressed to him, to purchase his culpable acquiescence by holding out the crown as the price of his complicity. He counselled the King with the disinterested conviction of a prince who recollected the faults of his father, and who would never separate his own cause from that of the reigning family and of legitimacy. He left Paris for Lyons some hours before the Count d'Artois, but he was accompanied by aides-de-camp and generals, almost all chosen from amongst the young officers of the Empire. This selection contrasted strangely with that of the Count d'Artois and the princes of the royal family. Both courts had in this staff of the Duke d'Orleans, if not accomplices, at least partisans in reserve.

The Count d'Artois departed himself in the middle of the night, accompanied by Marshal Macdonald and by Count Charles de Damas, a gentleman entirely devoted to his fortunes. The prince had no doubt that the royalist enthusiasm, in whose atmosphere he had lived at the Tuileries for the last ten months, would call up armies of royalists under his feet; and under this delusion he arrived at Lyons. The King, however, did not entirely share in it; for he felt that this was a struggle between martial spirit and civil patriotism, and that to contend with the attraction of the army against its former chief, he himself should require nothing less than the nation. In spite of the opposition of his cabinet, who were fearful of giving too much importance to what they called an adventure, and of complicating the crisis by mixing the legislature up with it, the King convoked the Chambers. This was a legal and a wise act, which called upon the country to aid itself, and which gave a twofold aspect to the attempt of Bonaparte in the eyes

of the people, by showing him armed not only against the throne, but against the charter—the representation of the country. He drew up with his own hand the proclamation which convoked the peers and deputies.

"We had adjourned the Chambers," said the King, "to the 1st of May, and in the interim we were devoting ourselves to the preparation of the measures with which they were to be occupied. The proceedings of the Congress of Vienna gave reasons to believe in the general establishment of a solid and durable peace, and we gave ourselves up, without interruption, to all the labours that might conduce to the security and the happiness of our people. This tranquillity is interrupted; this happiness may be compromised by malevolence and treason But the promptitude and wisdom of the measures we shall take will confound the guilty. Full of confidence in that zeal and devotion of which proofs have been given to us by the Chambers, we hasten to summon them around us.

"If the enemies of the country have founded their hopes on the divisions they endeavour to foment, its legal supporters and defenders will overturn their criminal hopes by the unassailable power of an indestructible union."

Marshal Soult, the minister-of-war, published on the following day an energetic, and to all appearance irrevocable, order, in which he urged, even to invective, the reprobation of the former lieutenant of Bonaparte against his repudiated chief, and broke for ever with the recollections of his early life. But we have already seen how these men of the sword have bent under every cause. Marshal Soult was at that time sincere in his devotion to the Bourbons, as he ought to have been sincere a few weeks later, in his return to the Emperor.

"Soldiers!" said the hero of Toulouse, and the last combatant for the cause of Napoleon, "this man who but just now abdicated in the face of Europe a usurped power of which he had made such fatal use—Bonaparte—has made a descent upon the soil of France, which he ought never to have seen again.

"What does he want? Civil war. What does he seek Traitors. Where will he find them? Is it amongst ...ry, whom he has so often deceived and sacrificed by

misdirecing their valour? Is it in the bosom of those families which his name alone still inspires with horror?

"Bonaparte despises us enough to believe that we can abandon a legitimate and well-beloved sovereign, to share the fate of a man who is nothing more than an adventurer. He believes it, the madman! His last act of lunacy shows him in his true colours.

"Soldiers! the French army is the bravest in Europe; it will also be the most faithful.

"Let us rally round the banner of the lilies, at the voice of this father of his people, of this worthy heir to the virtues of the great Henri. He himself has traced out the duties you have to fulfil. He puts at your head that prince, the model of French cavaliers, whose happy return to our country has driven away the usurper, and who, by his presence, is now gone to destroy his last and only hope.

"The Minister of War,
"THE MARSHAL DUKE DE DALMATIA.

"Paris, March 8, 1815."

XXXVII.

This order of the day did not suffice to calm the suspicions of the royalists as to the sincerity of Marshal Soult. The improbability of his entertaining such sentiments against his former chief was rendered more transparent to them even from the exaggerated terms in which he had expressed his anger.

Marshal Ney, appointed to the command of the army of Franche-Comté, emulated Soult in his indignation. The recent recollections of the scenes of Fontainebleau—the impatient summonses addressed by him to the vanquished Napoleon to abdicate—his eagerness, more soldier-like than decent, to rush among the foremost into the suite of the Count d'Artois at Paris, and into the court of Louis XVIII. at Compiègne—the resentment which he supposed Napoleon must entertain for this indecent haste—the real indignation, also, which he felt at a crime against the country, which might cause the ruin of France, excited even to insult the anger of Ney against

Napoleon. He appeared at the palace on the eve of his departure for his army, and on taking leave of Louis XVIII. he promised him victory; he promised the King, in terms at variance with his long friendship for Napoleon, "to bring him his enemy conquered, and in chains at his feet." The King saw him depart with hope, for so much anger could not be simulated. In fact, Marshal Ney did not deceive when he spoke thus. If there was ingratitude in his words, there was no treason in his heart; but there was weakness in his nature, and defection in his fate. Princes and nations cannot too much distrust these sanguine exaggerations. Sober-mindedness is the stamp of durable resolves.

BOOK SEVENTEENTH.

Universal stupor on the news of Napoleon's return—Different impressions —Bonapartist intrigues at Paris and in the Army—Distrust of the Court—Dismissal of Marshal Soult from the War-office—Appointment of Bourrienne as Minister of Police—Intrigues of Fouché—His interview with the Count d'Artois—Orleanist conspiracy in the Army—Drouet d'Erlon, Lefèvre Desnouettes, the brothers Lallemand—Manifestations of the Constitutional party—Lafayette—Addresses of the Chamber of Peers and of the Chamber of Deputies—Manifesto and Speech of the King—Address of the Count d'Artois to Louis XVIII—Speech of M. Lainé—The Chambers declare war against Napoleon on the proposition of M. Barrot—Protest of Benjamin Constant.

I.

MEANWHILE the news of Bonaparte's landing had spread through Paris and the provinces as a confidential whisper and a subterranean murmur rather than a clap of thunder. Great stillness prevailed throughout the land, no party evincing joy, but all being in a state of stupor. The army itself, placed by this event between duty and inclination, ran the risk, if forced to declare itself, of being deemed ungrateful if it abandoned Napoleon, perjured and parricidal if it delivered up the country to him. The public functionaries, on their side, trembled at being thus placed between the alternative of a deficiency and an excess of zeal, suspected by the royalists if they moderated their language, and proscribed perhaps by Napoleon if they exaggerated it. The nobility, the middle, the commercial and agricultural classes, who were just beginning to recover from ruin by means of peace, shuddered at a new convulsion of Europe, which would again bring war and desolation to their families and homesteads. Mothers, whom the conscription had deprived of sons, would behold them once more ruthlessly torn from the paternal roof to go and die upon the frontiers or in foreign lands. The emigrants who had

returned with the Bourbons anticipated fresh exile. The proprietors of national domains, among whom the charter had restored confidence, did not conceal from themselves that the invasion of the Emperor, by leading to a second restoration, would perhaps be accompanied by angry and revengeful measures, and that their property might become the ransom of a conquered country. The Orleanists, a party still beneath the surface, but long-sighted, were provoked by the intervention of a second empire between them and their ambitious views upon the throne. The liberals and republicans, still mingled together, lost, with a restoration weak and full of future concessions, at once the hope of consolidating representative liberty, or of one day establishing a durable republic, when the people should have become inured to the exercise of sovereignty under the gentle sway of an aged and a wise king. The ultra-royalists alone rejoiced in the delirium of their confidence, for they did not doubt that the earth would open under the handful of myrmidons that Bonaparte had brought to storm the throne, and that his crime once punished, they would be for ever delivered from that importunate spectre of empire and of glory which they had incessantly to encounter in the songs of the people and in the barracks of the soldiers. But their affected joy was not unmingled with a degree of uneasiness which saddened their hearts. All these conflicting feelings resulted in a dumb consternation, an undercurrent of agitation, a sinister sadness resembling the pressure of the atmosphere before the storm. France lived, spoke, moved, but breathed not. A general malediction sprang up in secret from every heart against this man whom nobody had summoned, and who came to obtrude his personal cause between Europe and France, between the throne and the nation, between peace and war, between all parties in short, to compromise, to overturn, and to ruin all. Such was in reality at that time and everywhere public opinion. People did not accost one another without complaining, or take leave of each other without combining their hearts against the common enemy.

At Paris only, and in the military towns, some few conspirators and malcontents, fallen from their importance or from their rank by the fall of the Empire, congratulated each

other in guarded language, ran about for news, concealed their hopes, and communed with each other in small groups to concert their plots and give vent to their ardour. But these citizens worked in the dark, ashamed of their scanty numbers, and fearful of the danger of appearing to insult the universal gloom by the scandal of their unseasonable joy. In this general taciturnity countenances alone spoke; the closest and most constrained were those of the Bonapartists, who betrayed themselves by their impenetrability. All France was in a state of gloom: every one felt that it was not a revolution but a conspiracy that was approaching.

II.

The council of ministers, acquainted by the police with the supposed existence of Bonapartist coteries in Paris, at the residences of Queen Hortense and of the principal friends of the Empire, drew up a list of arrests to be made amongst the alleged conspirators. These were Fouché, Marshal Davoust, Gérard, Méjean, Etienne, a witty and sarcastic writer, Savary, Réal, Arnault, Norvins, Bouvier-Dumolard, Maret, Sieyès, Excelmans, Flahaut. Marshal Soult, in spite of the exaggerated zeal and activity he had evinced to stifle the attempt beneath the energy and fidelity of the army, incurred the suspicions of the royalists by this very exaggeration. The treason of Labédoyere, the defection of the regiments, the first reverse of the royalist cause at Grenoble, were all laid to his charge. A rumour was set afloat and obtained credit that Soult had stationed regiments tampered with and seduced beforehand on the route of Napoleon, and had assembled 30,000 men at Chambery, to enable the Emperor to recruit, with greater facility from stage to stage, the forces he intended to march on Paris. The fidelity of the garrison of Antibes; the loyalty of Marshal Massena, who commanded the South, and who rallied his army to crush the Emperor before he could enter Lyons; the powerless but unforeseen resistance of General Marchand at Grenoble; and finally, the real motive of assembling 30,000 men in the Alps in virtue of the secret treaty of Vienna to dethrone Murat,

sufficiently acquitted Marshal Soult of all culpability on this head. The King himself believed in the perfect sincerity of his minister-of-war, and told him so on taking leave of him; but being compelled to remove even the pretext of a suspicion from the defenders of his cause, he thought himself obliged to sacrifice Soult to the exigencies of the case. He appointed in his place General Clarke, an officer of Irish origin, long attached to Napoleon as an aide-de-camp, as a negociator and as a minister, but who now exceeded in demonstrations of enthusiasm for the royal cause, and of bitterness against his former general, the most impetuous counsellor of the emigration; an irrational man, but sincere, and who changed masters no more from the moment he took service with the Bourbons. The King dismissed at the same time M. d'André, whose inactive and blind system of police had suffered the plot which enveloped France to be concocted without giving any useful warning of it to the government. He replaced him by Bourrienne, an old confidential secretary of Bonaparte, intimately acquainted with his character and his secrets, who had been dismissed by the Emperor for malversation, and who was incensed against him with a hatred which guaranteed to the royalists a desperate fidelity.

III.

Bourrienne sent police agents to arrest Fouché, but he escaped their vigilance by stratagem, and concealed himself in Paris. A few days previous to this, Fouché had had a secret interview at the residence of the Princess de Vaudemont, a friend of M. de Talleyrand, with the Count d'Artois. This prince, though the brother of Louis XVI., had overcome his repugnance and his recollections so far as to have a familiar interview with a regicide. He felt as if all was crumbling around him, and turned towards the Revolution to learn from it the means of conquering it. Fouché imparted to the Count d'Artois vague and retrospective counsels embracing an entire system of government which can never correct past errors, and which came too late when called for. These counsels recommended the Count

d'Artois to throw himself into the arms of the Revolution to escape from the Empire. But would the Revolution ever have accepted its natural enemies for chiefs? Louis XVI. had often received the same advice, and had sometimes endeavoured to follow it; but the Revolution had not the less brought him to the scaffold. The hidden meaning of these counsels of Fouché was to make himself the indispensable man; he courted the Bourbons; he spared Napoleon, he stirred up the Orleans party, he flattered the Republic; he knit and unravelled at the same time beginnings of plots with all parties.

IV

His secret intrigues to render himself at once formidable and indispenable had not awaited the landing of Napoleon. For several weeks past he had had scent of a conspiracy entirely military, into which a certain number of colonels, and of generals commanding bodies of troops in the departments had entered, and which held its meetings in Paris, in a lonely house in the Champs Elysées, the residence of General Berton. A Parisian banker, Hainguerlot, in whose hands were sums of money belonging to Jerome Bonaparte, was to furnish the funds necessary for the exploding of the conspiracy. Marshal Davoust had been sounded by the conspirators, but by his refusal had baffled or adjourned the movement. The intention was to send a frigate to the Isle of Elba to carry off and bring the Emperor to France, to urge the troops to insurrection and to march with daily increasing numbers on Paris.

This scheme being rendered abortive by the little unanimity to be found in the hearts of the chiefs for an unqualified restoration of the imperial despotism, another project sprang up among the discontented of the army. They changed nothing in the plan except the name of the chief to be substituted for the Bourbons. This chief, unknown to that prince himself, was the Duke d'Orleans. His name mixed up with the Revolution, and made popular for a time in connection with Dumouriez in the wars of the Republic, his title of prince of the reigning family, his wealth, his partiality for the generals of the Empire,

the advances he made to the old wrecks of the Revolution, conferred upon him this unsought-for dignity of candidateship for the revolutions made in his name, which compromised him then, but which were destined to crown him hereafter. The principal chiefs of this Orleanist conspiracy of the army, were General Drouet d'Erlon, commandant of the garrison of Lille, and of the important division of the North; General Lefèvre Desnouettes, colonel of the light cavalry of the imperial guard; the two brothers Lallemand, generals commanding the divisions of the troops stationed in the departments which extended from Lille to Paris. Fouché, acquainted with and a silent accomplice of this conspiracy, did not conceal from himself that the army and the people would not comprehend this rising of the troops which wanted the soldierlike and popular name of Napoleon, and that the name of one Bourbon substituted for another was one of those shades which statesmen can understand, but which remain unintelligible to the gross imaginations of the multitude. It had consequently been agreed on that the guard, the line, and the population of the North, and the Centre, should be stirred up in the name of the Emperor, that they should march on Paris under this apparent flag, but that the captive of Elba should be more closely watched than ever, and that after having dethroned and driven away the Bourbons of the elder branch by the shadow of Napoleon, a liberal and military revolution should be crowned on the head of the Duke d'Orleans. It was a conspiracy of diplomatists in the midst of, and in opposition to a conspiracy of soldiers

V.

Matters were in this state, and the generals were only awaiting the signal from Paris to act, when the Emperor, who had been made acquainted with the conspiracy, and who was fearful of seeing himself frustrated by the Duke d'Orleans in his hopes of the throne, which he was incessantly reascending in imagination, resolved at all hazards to forestall this new rivalry, and hastened his departure from the Isle of Elba before the period he had fixed upon and before the termination of the

Congress of Vienna. Napoleon's disclosures at St. Helena prove that the umbrage he had taken at the ambition and popularity of the Duke d'Orleans was the real cause of this precipitation. He was apprehensive of being forestalled in usurpation by a name which would have been a formidable competitor to his own in the army. But at the moment that the Emperor took this hasty resolution which was to interdict, by his presence on the French soil, the proclamation of any other dynasty than his own by the conspiring generals, Fouché, informed on the evening of the 5th of the landing of Bonaparte before the public were aware of it, resolved in his turn to forestall the Emperor, and to throw a third element of civil war, of confusion, and of hesitation among the people. During the night he sent for one of the generals Lallemand, who was in Paris, and revealed to him the news of the Emperor's landing; he told him that the court had discovered the conspiracy of which Lallemand was one of the chief actors, that the compromised generals were going to be arrested, tried and condemned, and that their only chance of safety now lay in boldness and promptness of action; they must either forestall the blow or receive it.

VI.

This emissary of Fouché's started immediately for Lille, gave the cue to Drouet d'Erlon, and to Lefèvre Desnouettes, combined his rising with that decided on by these generals, and took the route to Cambray with Lefèvre to accomplish it.

During the same night, Drouet d'Erlon, wishing to deceive his army, that he might not have to struggle against the fidelity of some of his officers, informed his lieutenants that an insurrection had broken out in Paris, and that the minister-of-war had ordered him to march thither with all his troops. The army, without any mistrust, took the road to Paris, while the astonished populace looked on without comprehending the movement of these columns of infantry and cavalry advancing in silence upon the capital.

While Drouet d'Erlon was thus continuing his mysterious movement upon Paris, Lefèvre Desnouettes and the two

generals Lallemand, arrived at Cambray, gave the same invented explanations to their regiments, and marched them by a circuitous route upon the town of La Fère, with the intention of seizing upon an important arsenal which would secure to the conspirators an abundance of arms, of artillery, and of ammunition. They, however, deferred until the following day their intended attack upon the arsenal; but General d'Aboville having conceived suspicions during the night about a movement of troops, so unusual and enigmatical, refused in a determined manner to allow the generals to enter the arsenal, in which refusal he was seconded by the garrison of La Fère Lefèvre and the brothers Lallemand dared not venture on an attack, the uncertainty and length of which would have exposed their crime to their own troops; they therefore returned to Noyon, where their commander-in-chief, General Drouet d'Erlon, had ordered them, they said, to join him to form a camp of 20,000 men.

During these two days of marches and counter-marches, of snares and subterfuges. the rumour of Napoleon's landing had spread through the north of France, and made these movements upon Paris still more suspicious. The population of the North, very far from being carried away, as had been supposed, by the name of the Emperor, retained all their ancient fidelity for the Bourbons, and all their antipathy against despotism. They themselves kept a watch upon the soldiers, not for the purpose of seconding them in insurrection, but to retain them within the bounds of duty; the conspiracy therefore wavered, like a body of troops on the point of disbanding itself.

VII

But it was about to be dissolved by another accident. The Duke d'Orleans, in his last interview with the King, had, it is said, revealed to the latter the guilty hopes which military conspirators built upon him in the North, and the overtures which had been made to him to favour this plot at least by his silence. No one knows to what extent these revelations were carried, but the Duke d Orleans had scarcely quitted Paris

with the Count d'Artois to repair to his post at Lyons, when the King promptly sent Marshal Mortier to Lille as commandant-general of that city, and of all the troops in the north of France. Marshal Mortier was an officer inaccessible to intrigue; faithful to Napoleon up to his abdication, faithful to the Bourbons since they became the legal sovereigns of the country; faithful at all times to himself and to his own dignity Marshal Mortier went to Lille without delay, but he had scarcely reached half way when he casually met the column of General Drouet d'Erlon advancing towards him in full march. The marshal, astounded at a movement of troops which no one had ordered, and of which henceforward he alone had the right to dispose, stopped his carriage and alighted, made himself known to his companions-in-arms, questioned the officers and soldiers, cross-examined General Drouet d'Erlon, who became confused, contradicted himself and stammered, and was placed in arrest by the marshal, who marched back the troops to Lille, where Drouet was confined in the citadel.

VIII.

At the same instant Lefèvre Desnouettes and his accom plices, generals Lallemand, were entering Noyon in the hope of finding D'Erlon there. Their troops, already rendered suspicious by the unaccountable march which they had been ordered to make, and by the attempt of which they had been made the accomplices at La Fère, began to interrogate each other. They were altogether shaken by not finding the column of General d'Erlon at Noyon. Their generals, however, succeeded in inducing the cavalry to go with them as far as Compiègne, where General Lefevre ordered the 6th regiment of light cavalry in garrison there to join his troops, and to follow them to Paris. This regiment, deceived like those of Lille, mounted without delay in their barrack yard, and followed the line of march with the chasseurs of the guard, when one of D'Erlon's officers and General Lallemand, who had re mained behind, galloped up, and taking Lefevre Desnouettes aside, informed him that the plot was discovered, and that

Drouet was made prisoner by his own troops. At this news, the three conspiring generals, Lefèvre and the two Lallemands, fled across the fields. Lefèvre escaped, but the two Lallemands were recognised and arrested in their flight. The troops returned to their cantonments, and in loyal addresses declared their mistake and their fidelity.

This conspiracy thus nipped in the bud, created great sensation throughout France, and at first shook, but afterwards tranquillized Paris, while it still remained an enigma to all. The King, who, through the Duke d'Orleans, was acquainted with its real nature, affected to be deceived, and to see in it nothing but a Bonapartist attempt, crushed by the fidelity and good sense of the old imperial guard. Napoleon, after his triumph, affected on his part to reward the chiefs of this movement for an intrepid and adventurous zeal in his cause, and he took care not to confess that any other name than his own had the power to excite any part of the army to insurrection. Fouché held his peace, and left the royalists to believe that he was a stranger to this conspiracy, the Orleanists that he had planned it for them, and the Bonapartists that for them alone he had acted in the matter.

IX.

During these rapid and confused movements at the extremes of the kingdom; and while the events of Grenoble and Lyons kept people's minds as undecided as fate itself seemed to be, the constitutional, liberal, and republican parties did not hesitate to declare themselves against Bonaparte. These were the only parties in France which had preserved independence and patriotism enough to place themselves boldly in front of an armed despotism, and in defence of the new throne, provided that throne preserved them from a return of servitude. Madame de Stael linked these parties together, and fired them by her own inspiration: her heart beat with contempt and indignation against the military insurrection which threatened to renew the ideas of a second reign of pretorians. Lafayette, who had been delivered by Bonaparte from the dungeons of

Olmütz, and who therefore owed him personal gratitude, had never at any period balanced between his gratitude and his opinion. Forgotten and inactive in an opulent retreat, the reign of Bonaparte had completely obscured him. For ten years past he had only been spoken of as a remnant of the history of a bygone age, which could find neither position nor distinction in a new one. The importance, at once revolutionary and patrician, of the part he had formerly played subsisted only in his own mind. His popularity had been too high to admit of his taking a subordinate rank, and his fame as a republican forbade him to degrade himself to the service of a fortunate despotism. He suffered from this inaction and obscurity after so much distinction, and he was constantly on the watch for an opportunity of reappearing on the scene. Liberty alone could afford him one: Bonaparte had closed it against him. His hatred, therefore, of the Emperor could only be measured by his impatience for glory and the pride of his recollections. The return of the Bourbons, from whose minds he had so many humiliations to obliterate, and of whom he had so many pardons to ask in his own soul, had been less repugnant to him than the return of Napoleon. He had offered his homage to the King and the Count d'Artois. In Louis XVIII. he found a sovereign whose character he knew, and whose cabals, ambition, and alliances with Mirabeau in 1789 and 1790 he had sometimes served and sometimes counteracted. He knew that the spirit of that period would revive with an unarmed and parliamentary Restoration, and that the name of Lafayette would come to life once more with the ideas of that time Perhaps he even hoped to regain, by the aid of the assemblies and of the people, that equivocal dictatorship at first assumed by Necker, afterwards by him, and disdained by Mirabeau, which elevates a man, not by his own glory, but on the terrors of a court and on the breeze of popularity. Perhaps, also, true to some antiquated imitations of America and England, he dreamt of those federations of powers and of provinces which had been the confused aspirations of his youth. He was a man capable of imitation rather than of innovation in politics, but a man of unbending conscience, and carrying self-love to the height of heroism.

X.

On the first rumour of Napoleon's debarkation Lafayette hastened to Paris and did not yield a jot when all were yielding in his party. Amidst the group that surrounded him was Benjamin Constant, German in descent and mind, half literary, half politician, half orator, half royalist, half republican, an old worshipper of the genius of Madame de Stael, formerly a tribune under the Consulate, a twilight celebrity rendered still more imposing by being in the background; also the Duke de Broglie, a young patrician, studious and rich in promise, whose name, whose fortune, and the patronage of Madame de Stael, whose daughter he had married, surrounded with a premature consideration; then there was M. d'Argenson, an illustrious name in the monarchical administration of France, formerly an aide-de-camp of Lafayette during the citizen dictatorship of Paris, a liberal more from philosophy than ambition, a sectarian at once evangelical and popular, determined to devote his life to the possible levelling of rights and the impossible levelling of modes of living, a good man quite at home in his Utopia, and very much astray in matters of fact, but whose chimeras even were virtues; next came M. Flaugergues, and some less important members of the legislative body associated with some constitutional royalists of '89, such as Lally-Tollendal and the surviving friends of Mirabeau, all forming a part of this assembly. It declared itself resolutely against the Empire, and only required the King to confide to it the ministry, when it would undertake to be responsible to him for the country. These men, fascinated by their recollections, forgot too completely that fifteen years of military government and of corruption had bowed down France, and that there was no longer a people to respond to their appeal, but a soldier to violate every principle.

XI.

For two days, in fact, it was intended to place the throne under the safeguard of this coterie, the remnant of the party

of Necker and Lafayette, and of what were called the popular men. M. Ferrand, a superannuated incapable; M. d'Ambray, a magistrate without patronage; M. de Montesquiou, a negociator without authority; M. de Blacas, out of his element amidst the court, the men, and the ideas of a revolution, unknown to the country, and hated for his pride, spoke of retiring before the greatness of the peril which threatened them. Lainé, Lally-Tollendal, D'Argenson, Benjamin Constant, and Lafayette were sounded; but this change of ministers in the midst of the crisis could not give the King one additional faithful partizan in the army; it would only have caused greater regrets for the short reign of this prince, and imparted more dignity to resistance. It was therefore resolved to adjourn to a more opportune moment the formation of a ministry to be indicated by the temper of the Chambers which had just assembled.

XII

They unanimously showed themselves worthy of the gravity of the situation, animated as they were with the enthusiasm of indignation against the violator of the country, and the enemy of liberty as yet scarcely founded. Not a voice, even indirectly, expressed the remotest secret favour towards a restoration of glory by violence.

"Sire," said the peers in their address of the 10th March, "you have assembled around you your faithful Chambers. The nation has not forgotten that previous to your happy return, pride in its madness had dared to dissolve them, and to force them to silence whenever it dreaded their sincerity. Such is the difference between legitimate and tyrannical power. Sire, your intelligence has taught you that the constitutional charter, the monument of your wisdom, would ensure for ever the stability of your throne and the security of your subjects."

"Sire," said the deputies, "the representatives of the French people feel that the humiliating fate reserved for the unfortunate subjects of tyranny is being prepared for them. Whatever faults may have been committed, this is not the moment to examine them. We ought all to unite against the

common enemy, and seek to render this crisis profitable for the safety of the throne and the public liberty."

In his manifestos the King spoke the language of feeling and of liberty. "After twenty-five years of révolution," he said, "we had brought France to a state of happiness and tranquillity. To render this state durable and solid, we had given to our people a charter which secured the liberty of our subjects. This charter was the daily rule of our conduct; and we found in the Chamber of Peers and that of the Deputies, all the assistance necessary to aid us in maintaining the glory and prosperity of the nation. The love of our people was the sweetest recompense of our labours, and the best guarantee of their happy success. It is this love that we summon with confidence against the enemy who has polluted the soil of France, and who wishes there to renew civil war: it is against him that all opinions ought to unite. All who sincerely love their country, all who feel the value of a paternal government, and of liberty guaranteed by the laws, should only have one thought,—that of destroying the oppressor, who cares for neither liberty nor country. All Frenchmen, made equal by the constitution, ought equally to stand forward in its defence. The moment has arrived to give a great example; we expect it from a free and valiant nation; it will always find us ready to direct it in this enterprise, on which depends the safety of France. Measures have been taken to arrest the enemy between Lyons and Paris. Our means will be sufficient if the nation will oppose to him the invincible obstacle of its devotion and its courage. France will not be vanquished in the struggle of liberty against tyranny, of fidelity against treason, of Louis XVIII. against Bonaparte."

The ministers themselves, so hostile or so short-sighted some days before, promised every constitutional guarantee in return for the devotion which the representatives evinced towards the King. Freedom of opinion, electoral liberty, reduction of taxation, freedom of the ports and of commerce, alleviation of the burdens on the soil, sanction to the inviolability of the charter,—all these were offered, accepted, and sworn to, the most friendly understanding existing between

the three powers. Danger and misfortune seemed to render the value of a paternal government expected from a king who had taken refuge in the hearts of his people, the more deeply felt. The King was desirous of mollifying the looks as much as he had touched the hearts of all; and, surrounded by all his family and friends, repaired to the Chamber of Deputies. All Paris pressed around his cortege, to exhibit to his eyes or his ears the gesture or the cry of the lowest of its citizens. This phrensy for misfortune exceeded in pathetic demonstrations that excited by the Emperor on his most triumphal entries in Paris. Louis XVIII. was touching, noble, and antique in his attitude. The royalty of sentiment never had a more touching actor. He struggled, in the face of his people and of Europe, against glory in its violence, with his age, his heart, and his right.

"Gentlemen," said he, with a grave serenity in his features and a most tragical and mild accent in his voice, "at this moment of the crisis, when the public enemy has penetrated into a portion of my kingdom and menaces the liberty of all the rest, I have come amongst you, to draw still closer the ties, which, uniting us together, constitute the strength of the state. I have again beheld my country; I have reconciled it with all the foreign powers; and they will be, we need not doubt, faithful to the treaties which have restored peace to us. I have laboured for the happiness of my people; I have received, and still continue daily to receive the most touching marks of their love. At sixty years of age could I better end my career than by dying in their defence? I fear nothing for myself, but I fear for France. He who comes to light amongst us the torches of civil war, entails upon us also the scourge of a foreign one. He comes to replace our country under his iron yoke. He comes, in short, to destroy this constitutional charter which I have given you, that charter which is my noblest title in the eyes of posterity, that charter which is cherished by every Frenchman, and which I here swear to maintain. Let us rally around it! Let it be our sacred standard! The descendants of Henri IV. will be the first to range themselves beneath it Let the co-operation of both

chambers lend to authority all the power of which it stands in need, and this truly national war will prove, by its happy issue, what a great people, united by a love for their king and the fundamental law of the state, can achieve."

XIII.

The soul of modern monarchy seemed to have spoken by the mouth of the King: it awoke the spirit of liberty in every heart, and all burst forth in one shout of "Long live the King!" "War against the Usurper!" With some he was the usurper of the throne, with others the usurper of the country; but in the minds of all he was the usurper of the free national will, one who would gladly make free laws for himself, but who would not accept liberty even won by violence and the sword. Human nature is pathetic: the scene, the actors, the words, the occasion, the auditory, constituted all the elements of the tragic catastrophe of the ancient drama. The audience in the galleries sobbed; hands waving white handkerchiefs were raised towards the ceiling, or were shaken throughout the hall, as if to give forebodings of victory to the King and the deputies. There was not an individual at that moment in that vast assembly who had not determined to lay down his life to save the people and the throne from the armed oppression which had pounced upon the country

XIV.

General credit was attached to the words of Louis XVIII., whose wisdom attested his sincerity, but a portion of the people entertained doubts of the sincerity of his brother and his family in the acceptation of the charter. The royal family had had a meeting and deliberated on the nature of the engagements they should enter into with the nation, when their recollections, their hopes, and their scruples had yielded to the pressure of the common danger.

The Count d'Artois, who had returned the evening before from Lyons, advanced towards the King, as if impelled by the

communicative power of enthusiasm, and amidst the profound silence which this unusual proceeding had imposed upon the assembly: "Sire!" said he in a voice of emotion to his brother, "I know that I am now departing from the ordinary rules in speaking before your Majesty, but I implore you to excuse me, and to permit me to express here, in my own name, and that of my family, the unanimity with which we participate, from the bottom of our hearts, in the sentiments and principles which animate the King." Then turning towards the assembly and extending his hand in the attitude assumed to confirm the coronation oath: "We swear," he exclaimed in a voice no longer restrained by the limits of reserve—"we swear to live and die faithful to the King and to the constitutional charter!" The last remnant of feeling which still struggled in the breasts of some of the liberal deputies and auditors of this affecting scene, dissolved at these words, and their hearts responded to the prince's oath by another. The Count d'Artois then inclined himself towards the King, as if to kneel before him. The King raised him and extended his hand towards him, as though he had received his oath in the name of the nation. The Count d'Artois kissed his brother's hand and moistened it with some tears of emotion. His reverses at Lyons had too well taught him that there was no other refuge for his family or himself, but in the protection of the nation and of liberty.

XV.

The assembly then itself excited by an invincible emotion, took part as a national chorus, by an individual and impassioned dialogue, in the scene which had roused its enthusiasm. "It is for us to die!" they exclaimed, extending their hands towards the King. "It is our duty to cover with our bodies the King, the country, and the laws! It is for us to acquit ourselves of a debt which France owes to a prince who has recollected only his relationship to the country, and who has compromised the peace of his latter days, to come and teach us once more the sweets of liberty! The King, in life and in death! We will live and die for the King!"

The King and his family then retired, escorted by the whole population, and followed to the Tuileries by the universal echo of their popularity.

M. Lainé, who presided over the assembly, quitted the chair after the departure of the King, and yielding to the impulse of his soul, which was easily moved, and of his eloquence, always prompt in the expression of noble sentiments, he invoked the genius of liberty, of the country, and of concord, to bring forth armies from the soil, and sacred anger to inflame the souls of all. He recalled the happy auguries and the prosperous beginning of a reign interrupted even from its commencement by the perverse ambition of despotism, irritated that the soil was escaping from its fangs. "The world," he exclaimed, "was astonished at the profound peace which followed the Restoration. We may defy history to point out any period of our annals when the liberty of the nation was more respected by the authority of the throne. The wisdom of the King had scarcely commenced, like us and with us, to project the perfecting of our infant institutions, when an incredible apparition astonished all minds. Heavens! To what calamities would not our unhappy country fall a prey, if this man were to triumph over the disarmed will of the people! The most stoical heart is struck with terror at the thought, for the imagination is still lit up by the burning of Moscow, and I see its fatal glimmer reflected even upon the columns of the Louvre! But it is not possible! No; France will not suffer either its King or its liberty to perish!"

XVI.

The unanimous plaudits of the assembly evinced that these words of M. Lainé had expressed the thoughts of all hearts. The chamber declared the war to be national, and entrusted the absolute dictatorship to the government, conscious that the hour of deliberation was past, and that the national representation had but one function and but one part to perform in these impending dangers: to rally round the sovereign, to

show by their presence that the nation was with him, to defy the invasion of Bonaparte to the last moment with the sacred majesty of the people, and to await on their benches for victory or slavery. A deputy of La Lozère, the father of an orator, since celebrated in the annals of his country, M. Barrot, in a resolution which was carried, invoked the principles of the resolution in behalf of the royal dignity:—

"Considering," said this resolution, "that the nation arose in a body in 1789, to conquer, in concert with its King, the natural and imprescriptible rights which belong to all nations; that the enjoyment of them was guaranteed to the people by the constitutions they had freely accepted in 1792, in the year V., and in the year VIII.; that the charter of 1814 is only the development of the principles on which these constitutions were based; considering, that since 1791, all the governments which have disregarded the rights of the nation have been overthrown, and that no government can maintain itself except by following the line of constitutional principles; that Bonaparte had disregarded and violated them all in defiance of the most solemn oaths; that the general and spontaneous wish had recalled to the throne a family which France was accustomed to venerate, and a prince who, at the period of our regeneration, powerfully seconded the efforts of his august brother to effect this regeneration; the Chamber of Deputies declares the war against Napoleon to be a national war."

XVII

On the following day, Benjamin Constant, the organ of the constitutional party, and inspired by the genius of Madame de Staël, borrowed from antiquity its most tragical accents, and from history its most offensive pen, to raise the reprobation of the nation against Bonaparte to the heights of history and of the public peril! Eloquent and vain boastings of these stoical resolutions which freely flowed from the pen of the writer, but which a few days after could not be found in the heart of the man!

"He re-appears then—this man stained with our blood; he

reappears—this man but now pursued by our unanimous maledictions. What wants he, who has carried devastation in every country in Europe—he, who has stirred up against us all the nations of Europe—he who, having brought upon France the humiliation of an invasion, has lost us even our own conquests, made prior to his domination? He demands his crown again; and what are his rights? Hereditary legitimacy? But a short occupation of a dozen years, and the designation of a child for successor cannot be compared to a peaceful reign of seven centuries. Does he urge the wishes of the people? These wishes should be regarded. Have they not been unanimous in all hearts in rejecting Bonaparte? He promised us victory, and thrice he shamefully forsook his troops in Egypt, in Spain, and in Russia, giving up his companions in arms to the triple pressure of cold, destitution, and despair! He promises the maintenance of property, but even in this he cannot keep his word; for having no longer the riches of the universe to reward his satellites with, he wants to grasp our property to satisfy his wants. He returns now poor and greedy, having nothing to claim and nothing to offer. Who can he seduce? Intestine and foreign war; these are the presents that he brings us. His appearance, which is for us the renewal of every misfortune, is for Europe a signal of extermination. On the side of the King, there is constitutional liberty, safety, and peace; on that of Bonaparte, slavery, anarchy, and war. He promises clemency and pardon; but a few words thrown out disdainfully, what else do they offer than the guarantee of contempt? His proclamations are those of a fallen tyrant who wishes to clutch the sceptre again; it is an armed chief who brandishes his sabre to excite the avidity of his soldiers; it is Attila, it is Gengis-Khan, more terrible even and more odious, who is preparing everything to systematize massacre and pillage. What people would be more worthy of contempt than us, if we held out our hands to him? We should become the laughing-stock of Europe, after having been its terror; we should take back a master whom we ourselves have loaded with opprobrium; our slavery would no longer have a pretext, our abjection no more bounds; and

under the weight of this profound abjection, what would we dare to say to this King whom we need not have recalled? for the allied powers wished to respect the national will; to this King whom we have attracted by our spontaneous resolutions to that soil on which his family had already suffered so much! Should we say to him: You have put faith in Frenchmen; we have loaded you with our homage, and given you confidence by our oaths; you have quitted your asylum—you are come amongst us alone and unarmed. So long as no danger existed, so long as you were dispensing power and favours, an immense people deafened you with their noisy acclamations; you have never abused their enthusiasm. If your ministers have committed a great many errors, you have been noble—good—sensible. One whole year of your reign has not caused so many tears to be shed as one day of the reign of Bonaparte. But he re-appears at the extremity of our territory; he re-appears—this man stained with our blood and but recently pursued by our unanimous maledictions; he shows himself, he threatens, and neither do our oaths restrain us, nor your confidence affect us, nor age inspire us with respect; you thought you had found a nation, but you have only found a herd of slaves. Parisians! No, such shall not be our language—such at least will not be mine. I have seen that liberty was possible under monarchy—I have seen the King rallying round the nation. I shall not go, like a miserable turncoat, crawling from one power to another, covering infamy by sophistry, and stammering out impious words to purchase a life of shame"

BOOK EIGHTEENTH.

Situation of France—Attitude of the Army, and of the People of Lyons—The Princes at Lyons—Entry of Napoleon into that Town—Decrees and Proclamations—His departure from Lyons—He passes through Villefranche and Macon—Defection of Ney—Napoleon arrives at Chalons-sur-Saône, at Avallon, and at Auxerre—Interview between Napoleon and Marshal Ney—The Emperor proceeds to Montereau—Order to General Gerard—He arrives at Fontainebleau.

I.

Thus, the whole of France was on the one hand hastening to Paris around its King, for the maintenance of peace, of its national representation, its liberty, and its dignity as a nation, loudly refusing to be the prize of a hero who had become the great seditionary of the sword; while, on the other hand, Napoleon had arrived with impunity as far as Grenoble, hemmed in on all sides, it is true, but from afar, by *corps d'armée* which dared not be directed against him for fear that, although faithful at a distance, the vortex of his presence might carry them away from the side of the nation and the King. With Masséna in the South, Macdonald at Lyons, the Duke d'Angoulême and his generals on the right bank of the Rhône, Ney at Besançon and at Lons-le-Saulnier, the Duke de Berry before Paris, Mortier in the North amongst those camps which were less in motion than in a state of armed and expectant observation; a whole population inactive, stupified, and exasperated, but undecided and liable, not to be carried away, but subdued by the irresistible precipitation of events and by the first victory gained by either of the two contending parties. Such was France at this moment, and the fall of Lyons gave it the first decisive impetus. Let us now return to Bonaparte, whom

we left encamped at Bourgoing, in the midst of the plains of Dauphiné, and resume the account of the eventful day which delivered up to him the second capital of France.

II.

The Count d'Artois and the Duke d'Orleans had hardly had time to reach Lyons, when a bulletin was distributed throughout Paris, announcing that Bonaparte had just been driven from the walls of that city, back to Grenoble, by the Duke d'Orleans, at the head of 20,000 men. This fresh manœuvre of the police, or rumour suggested by hope, for a moment raised the spirits of all, and none feared to declare themselves against the conquered, but the report had no foundation whatever.

The Duke d'Orleans had arrived at Lyons a few hours before the Count d'Artois, and found assembled there two regiments—one of infantry, the other of cavalry. A third regiment of the line was hastening from the mountains of the Loire. A mounted National Guard formed itself at the voice of the princes, intoxicated with that enthusiasm which evaporates in empty acclamations. The local National Guard was 20,000 strong, and consisted of the sons of those very men who had buried themselves beneath the ruins of their town, rather than submit to the tyranny of the convention; while volunteers hastened from all the neighbouring towns to join its ranks. It was believed that the government would immediately converge the army of the South under Masséna, that of Nismes under the Duke d'Angoulême, and above all, the army of Ney, the advanced posts of which already reached the Rhône through the department of l'Ain, and thus constitute Lyons the rock on which to wreck the feeble army of Napoleon; and confidence in this idea restored courage everywhere. In the towns there were no signs of sedition, and the country looked on in silent consternation. Napoleon was popular with them; but his popularity, whatever may have been said of it since, was more historical than actual. When far away he was wished for, but when near he was dreaded for in the eyes of the inhabitants

of the country and the towns, the name of Napoleon was synonymous with war, and the land was satiated with carnage. Moreover, he had been conquered, and had lost that prestige of invincibility, which is half the battle. If Lyons had been without troops, its defence might have for a few days intimidated or retarded the Emperor.

III.

But the coldness with which the Duke d'Orleans and the Count d'Artois were received by the regiments, began to make the populace hesitate; and this hesitation, in its turn, imparted to the troops, who had already been tampered with by the emissaries of Napoleon, more pride and disdain in their attitude before the princes. The Duke d'Orleans was unknown to them, and appeared to be fulfilling the duty of his station rather than giving all his heart and voice to animate the army. The Count d'Artois showed more energy, reviewed the troops, mixed with the soldiers, conversed with the subordinate officers, and sought for those cries of loyalty which are the pledges of feeling, and by which the soldiery become bound; but met with nothing else than silence, icy words, and a few cries of "Vive l'Empereur!" which the chiefs dared not punish, fearing lest an appearance of suspicion might cause the defection to break out openly. Marshal Macdonald, who was adored by the soldiers, visited all the approaches to the town, on the two banks of the Saône and of the Rhône to reconnoitre the positions, dispose the forces, and cover the town against the army of the Emperor which was approaching. He advanced in person on the road to Bourgoing with a feeble escort, but the acclamations which preceded the advanced guard of Napoleon, the faces of his own soldiers, the consternation or participation of the suburbs, showed him that there was no hope of resistance outside the walls; and that a more or less prolonged defence of the passage of the Rhône afforded the only possible chance of success, until the arrival of Ney and Masséna, whose junction would hem the Emperor in between Grenoble and Lyons. The marshal therefore com-

manded that the bridges between the town and suburbs should be destroyed; and the sappers were about to obey when the mob of the suburbs by which they had been surrounded since the morning energetically opposed this obstruction of the town, and made the soldiers throw down their axes, and confine themselves to partly barricading the bridges.

The marshal then returned to the Place de Bellecour, where the troops had been drawn up in order of battle since morning, to rejoin the irresolute princes, who dared no longer issue any orders but passively to await events.

IV.

The soldiers, however, still listened to the voice of the marshal, whose unconquerable fidelity to Napoleon at the period of his abdication had rendered him popular; and several squadrons and battalions and some artillery went in silence to take up the positions he assigned them, before the bridges and on the quays looking towards Dauphiné. This was the last demonstration of obedience and discipline; for all hearts had already crossed the Rhône, and the silent and sullen soldiers could hear the confused clamours raised by the first detachments of the army of Grenoble, in the plains on the opposite bank, and in the tumultuous suburbs of La Guillotière, while planting there the eagles of Napoleon.

V.

The Emperor, in the midst of his column, and preceded by a strong advance guard, had left Bourgoing in the morning, fatigued by this long journey of 120 leagues made in seven marches, and by the emotions inspired by his constant and hazardous game with fortune since his landing. He had dismounted from his horse and advanced at a slower pace in an open carriage, surrounded by a fluctuating crowd of that suburban population which stirs at the smallest wave that ruffles the calm surface of a nation. These men, mixing

with the soldiers and carrying branches of box and holly, those laurels of the North, mingled with their songs of victory, loud cries of "Vive l'Empereur!" which were responded to, either by way of imitation, or through motives of terror, from all the hamlets, and from the doors and windows of all the houses on the road. They treated the soldiers to wine, and singing joyously, carried their knapsacks, arms and baggage for them The march thus resembled one continued orgie, and was only redeemed by the name of the great man, now fallen so low, who was the object of it, by a noble sentiment of glory and military patriotism, and by the manly and stern aspect of the troops, ashamed of such want of discipline and proud of their chief

VI.

The secret communications which the Emperor maintained with Lyons, notwithstanding the blockade of the roads, apprised him that the efforts of the Count d'Artois, the Duke d'Orleans, and Marshal Macdonald had been successful in stopping the passage of the bridges, and that Ney would soon advance from Bourg towards the Upper Rhône. He therefore resolved to surprise Macdonald and anticipate Ney, by crossing the river at Miribel; Marshal Bertrand was accordingly ordered to march on this little town, which is two leagues above Lyons, and there to collect the boats necessary for the passage of the river. His plan was thus to leave Lyons, which was too well defended, for a time on his left; to turn, by crossing at Miribel, the high table-land on which is the suburb of the Croix-Rousse, and which separates, like a peninsula, the Rhône from the Saône; to reach the last-named river, take possession of its two banks, and thus enclose the princes and their army in Lyons, while his advanced guard should go and incite to defection the numerous army of Ney, on the road from Bourg and Macon. He did not doubt that he should entice it away, and thus create in the heart of France a *mêlée* and confusion of armies and of causes, under favour of which he would pursue his course towards Paris. But the light troops which he had despatched in advance to La Guillotière having been received with accla-

mations by the faubourg, which assured to him the passage of the bridges, he recalled Bertrand and pressed forward his march on Lyons, appearing in sight of the quay of the Rhône at four o'clock in the afternoon.

VII.

Macdonald was at that moment leading two battalions of infantry to defend the entrance of the bridge on the side of the faubourg. But no sooner had the hussars of Napoleon, encouraged and pushed on to the very bridge by the insurrectionary movement which sprang up beneath their horses' feet, appeared before the battalions of Macdonald, than those troops, hitherto faithful, opened before the cortege of people and of soldiers, mingled with them in an irrevocable embrace, and abandoning their general, precipitated themselves on the barricades to destroy them and open the way for sedition. Macdonald, in dismay, vainly endeavoured to recall them with his sword, his voice, and gesture, to a sense of honour, if not of duty; but his cries and his tears were lost in the tumult. Two Polish hussars, drunk with the wine of the faubourgs, sprang over the last remaining obstacles of the barricade, and rode with their drawn sabres on the marshal, who owed his life to the fleetness of his horse, and hastened through the streets of the town to gain the road to Paris.

VIII

At the cries of the bands of the faubourgs, the aspect of the Polish hussars, and the appearance of the grenadiers of the guards who were crossing the bridge, the troops posted on the quays wavered, and communicated their disaffection to the regiments of reserve encamped on the Place de Bellecour around the princes. The Duke d'Orleans disappeared under the protection of those of his officers least obnoxious to the fanatics of the Emperor. The Count d'Artois, threatened by the gestures and cries of the soldiers, decamped at full gallop, protected by a single horseman of that mounted National Guard

which in the morning had sworn to die for him; and the carriages of the two princes, prepared outside the suburbs on the road to Paris, received them as fugitives, and bore them in consternation towards the Tuileries.

IX.

France was now thrown open to Napoleon as far as Fontainebleau by this road. The corps which preceded, or followed him from Grenoble, entered Lyons in succession, between the hours of four and seven. The fickle and tumultuous population of the town mingled with that of the suburbs, and with the soldiers, inundated the quays, the squares, and the streets, the excitement assuming the appearance of enthusiasm. The National Guard of Lyons yielded to the fiat of destiny, and armed itself solely for the protection of property, more valued than political opinion by this hardworking people. A forest of bayonets covered the town, which was illuminated as for a public rejoicing, although it would have been illuminated just the same and with more sincerity of feeling if Napoleon had perished before its walls; but France had endured the yoke of the army for the last ten years, and Lyons pretended to adore its oppressors. The Emperor, however, whether he felt it embarrassing to preserve a proper expression of countenance amongst rebels whom he detested, at the same time that he incited them, or whether he feared the weapon of an assassin, and did not wish to die before he had completely triumphed, waited until after dark, as he had done at Grenoble and the other towns, to make his entry.

He caused himself to be conducted to the splendid palace of the Archbishop of Lyons, Cardinal Fesch, his uncle, which was already filled with a crowd of his generals and councillors, who had hastened thither at the news of his victory; and there, affecting a paternal confidence in the people whom he had just conquered, he would have no other guard than the citizens who had armed themselves the day before to fight against him. But when the officers of the mounted National Guard came to offer him a guard of honour of a troop of cavalry in his court-

yards: "No," he replied contemptuously, and with a feeling of noble indignation, which revealed the soldier beneath the adversary; "no! I will not have around me soldiers who have abandoned their prince the Count d'Artois, who relied on their honour."

X.

After having received the authorities and exchanged some noble words with the Royalist mayor, M. de Farges, the Emperor passed a part of the night in dictating nine decrees, by which he again took possession of the Empire. Up to this time he had temporised with the kingdom, but this last victory decided his position; and the more resolutely he grasped the Empire at Lyons, the more he spread terror and the certainty of his triumph, for the appearance of reigning at Lyons was equal to fighting before Paris.

In the first decree he re-established all the magistrates who were in office in 1814, and dismissed all those whom the Bourbons had appointed in their place.

By the second, he expelled from the different corps of the army, all the emigrants who had returned with the King.

By the third, he abolished the white flag, the standard of the monarchy, and all the decorations which the ancient monarchy had distributed to its partisans.

By the fourth, he reconstituted the Imperial Guard as a modern pretorian band, a truly military patrician cohort destined, he believed in his short-sightedness, to replace the ancient Pretorians, or to renew the system of the Strelitzes and the Janissaries.

By the fifth, he confiscated all the property of the princes of the royal family.

By the sixth, he abolished the ancient nobility, and restored the nobility of his own creation.

By the seventh, he condemned to banishment all the emigrants who had returned to their country with the Bourbons, and placed their property under sequestration, or temporary confiscation.

By the eighth, he annulled all the proclamations made by the King in the honorary and lucrative order of his legion of honour, of which, to the great detriment of the austere manners of a democracy, he had made an institution for the emulation of vanity instead of the emulation of French virtue.

By the ninth, he dissolved the Chambers of Peers and Deputies, and abrogated the charter; promising at the same time the convocation of a *Champ de mai*, a kind of states-general of the nation, which should deliberate on the modifications to be made in the institutions of the Empire.

Possessed of the second town of the kingdom, and an army multiplied within its walls, he threw off the republican mask which he had worn till now, and showed the visage of open tyranny. He had given to the people the name of citizens, which recalled the dignity and equality of democracy; but he dropped this formula on the day that he thought he should no longer have any need to flatter the nation, and addressed his decrees and proclamations to the French. The republicans, who had been seduced for a moment, began on this to murmur, and to hold back, seeing that his exile had only prompted him to make use of the language of liberty for a day.

XI.

After having despatched his army by the route of Burgundy, he left Lyons on the 13th, and slept at Villefranche. Disorder and tumult, rather than enthusiasm, preceded and followed him on this road from Lyons to Macon, the most densely peopled of all the roads of France. His partisans endeavoured, in vain, to deceive him as to the nature of the excitement amongst the districts passed through; where anxiety, curiosity and secret dread of what was about to be accomplished, prevailed much more than the fanaticism of a few sectaries and peasants who had come down from the mountains. The fickle, vulgar, and irresponsible mob alone uttered acclamations round the wheels of his carriage, or at the sight of the uniform of his grenadiers; while all who had anything at stake, whether the proceeds of their industry, their fortune, or a child

in the hazards of this return, either fled or were silent. Napoleon arrived on the evening of the 14th at Macon, a town where he had hoped for a brilliant reception. He was, however, disappointed.

XII.

This town had the reputation of being revolutionary in principle, having furnished both actors and victims in the tragedies of 1789, and of 1793. The impression that republicanism had been betrayed and persecuted by Napoleon, prevailed there in the opinions of all the classes which did not belong to the nobility or the emigration; therefore, between these royalists and republicans, there was no scope for imperial fanaticism. Though a plebeian town, but not a servile one, Macon and the immense population of its rich country, had groaned in anguish beneath a foreign occupation, but applauded with rapture the downfall of tyranny; and Napoleon remembering this, dreaded this proud and tenacious people. He was struck with the solitude and silence in which the inhabitants left him with his troops in the inn at which he had put up; like a people submitting to, but not encouraging the attempt against their country. A few groups of children, incited by the distribution of some pieces of money, a few men in rags and women of doubtful character, raised a few mercenary and feeble cries beneath his balcony, upon which he opened the windows, looked at them with scorn, withdrew again, and said to the mayor whom he had caused to be summoned—"Have you nothing but this populace to show me?" His scorn increasing to anger, he vehemently reproached the magistrates with having allowed the enemy to penetrate within their walls in 1814, as if the occupation of these rich provinces, left defenceless against the armies of Schwartzenberg and of Bianchi, which consisted of 180,000 men, had not been the fault of his own ambition and short-sightedness. He was told in reply, "that a few volunteers without arms and unsupported, could not subdue invading armies, to whom his own heroic soldiers, commanded by himself, had been obliged to yield up France and the Empire; and

that the faults of the government more than counterbalanced the faults of the people." "That is true," said he, becoming softened and caressing the spokesman of the town with his familiar gesture; "we have all failed. We must forget our mutual wrongs, and henceforward think of nothing but the welfare and happiness of France."

XIII.

From Macon it was that he forwarded his proclamations of Grenoble and of Lyons to Marshal Ney, whose advanced guard and main body remaining motionless at a few leagues' distance, appeared to be hesitating whether to cut off his route to Paris, or not. Being uncertain of the intentions of his former lieutenant, Napoleon sent him no other communtication; for believing in his honour, he did not insult his fidelity, by proposing to him to betray his duty towards his new masters, the Bourbons; but he trusted that the rapidity of his triumph, the fall of Grenoble and of Lyons, and his unopposed march on Paris, would be sufficient inducements for the marshal and his army to join his cause, and that the current of his glory would of itself sweep away his former friend and his battalions.

XIV.

Alas! he was not mistaken in the opinion he had thus formed of the involuntary impulse, and the weakness and passive leaning towards his cause of his old companion in arms. Ney, whose heart was weak before the allurements of friendship, and whose imagination was easily shaken by every stroke of fortune, was a hero only in the field of battle. In council he was irresolute, in extreme situations undecided; and when a question arose what part to take, he was unequal to the accomplishment of difficulties, or even of his duty. In this case the hope of glory obscured his sense of honour, that only real and incorruptible glory of the individual. His self-command was weakened by his perplexity, since the landing of the Emperor, which increased at each step that his chief had made in advancing towards his own army. His irreso

lution and delay, although not prompted by perfidy, occasioned the loss of time, of the cause of the Bourbons, of France, and of his own reputation; for if he had removed his army from Franche-Comté by forced marches, to hasten to Lyons and join the princes, there is not the least doubt that he would have prevented the fall of that town, and given Masséna and the Duke d'Angoulême time to hem in Napoleon's 6,000 men between three fires; or that if he had directed his army on the road of Burgundy, either by way of Macon, or by way of Châlons and Dijon, he would have cut off the route to Paris from the Emperor, and that even by falling back, without fighting, on Sens, Melun, and Fontainebleau, and on the army of reserve of the Duke de Berry under the walls of the capital, he would have opposed the front of France in arms before Paris, to the feeble and disordered columns of Napoleon, and still have saved, if not the charter and the throne, at least the honour of his country and his own character for fidelity. But the whole of the false and complex position of the French army being found personified in him, he was destined to be, at one and the same time, the accomplice, the culprit, and the victim of that army, which knew not either to approve of an attempt repugnant to the conscience of the country, nor to resist the impulse of the past, to save its native land, to preserve its own honour, or to do its duty.

XV.

Marshal Ney, on being called to Paris, as we have already said, by Marshal Soult on the news of the landing, had hastened thither, still unacquainted with the cause of his being summoned. On alighting from his carriage at the house of his brother-in-law Gamot, he had learnt the public report from him, and was struck with indignation at the audacity and criminality of this invasion. "What is this man about to do?" he cried; "this man who has nothing to bring us but civil war? If he did not rely on our divisions, would he have dared to place his foot on French soil?"

While impressed with this feeling it was that he flew to the King, and, in the presence of the gentlemen of his court,

swore to bring Bonaparte back, captive, and chained in an iron cage. Words of sinister import from the mouth of an old friend, and which were afterwards feebly disclaimed, but have since been proved at the trial. On leaving the Tuileries, he started for Besançon, the head-quarters of his military command, where he displayed the same resolve, only softened in terms, and mingled with expressions of sorrow at the fatal choice between duty and the allurement of ancient glory, which the presence of Napoleon imposed upon the army.

Besançon, as a military position, not appearing to him to be sufficiently near the line of march of Napoleon, he advanced his troops and transferred his head-quarters to Lons le-Saulnier, and his outposts to Poligny, Dôle, and Bourg, prepared equally to march, as circumstances should require, on Lyons or on Dijon. M. de Bourmont and General Lecourbe commanded the divisions of his army under him. Bourmont, an old Vendean general, who, after the pacification of La Vendée, had passed over to the service of the Emperor, was a man whose adventurous ambition had led him to try his fortune with, and to serve the two causes in succession. He was a Royalist in honour, a soldier in disposition, doubtful in his antecedents, accustomed as well to the camps of Brittany as to those of Napoleon, quick to take advantage of circumstances, and pliant under the change of events, whether of necessity or victory. Lecourbe, a brave, consummate, and frank, though licentious soldier, was the former lieutenant of Moreau in his German campaigns, was general-in-chief after him, covered with the glory of the Republic, out of favour during the whole reign of Napoleon, soured by retirement and the disregard of his master, and come back to the Bourbons through motives of resentment and patriotism, he was an excellent commander to oppose to the return of Bonaparte.

The inclinations of the troops were fluctuating. Nevertheless the officers, with whom a sense of honour prevailed over their instincts, appeared resolved to do their duty, while the wavering soldiers allowed a few signs of partiality for the Emperor, rather than of mutiny, to escape them. The sovereign ascendancy of the name of Ney and his example, could compete even with the ascendancy of the name of Napoleon.

The authorities of four departments were intrepidly devoted to the Bourbons, and the National Guards, still warm with enthusiasm at the return of peace, of liberty, and of the Bourbons, were well commanded and disposed to second the fidelity of the troops.

XVI

The marshal had sent M. de Rochemont, an officer, in disguise, to Macon, to observe the feeling and bearing of the people on the road of the Emperor. Bertrand, on the other hand, had dispatched emissaries carrying the proclamations and acts of the Emperor to Lons-le-Saulnier. Ney was overwhelmed, beset, and pestered on all hands with the reports and the news that arrived from the army of the Emperor to his own, and his resolutions, at continual war within his soul, followed the course of the events which were hurrying on, and the alternatives presented at the interviews he eagerly sought with his generals, like a man who, finding no resource in his own judgment, seeks the support of others. Some officers sent by Napoleon, represented to him that Austria and England sided with the Emperor, that all had been arranged in congress between Talleyrand and Europe, and that if civil war should ensue, the blood which would be shed and the miseries of his country would fall on his head, for his obstinate adherence to a mistaken sense of honour. Eagles and crowns of laurel were secretly distributed to the regiments during the night, to prepare for the embellishment of the military revolt. The soldiers, ever corrupted by inactivity, seeing the indecision of their chief, and attributing his hesitation, either to fear of encountering the army of the Emperor or to secret complicity, became more perverted every hour, and their perturbation communicated itself to the marshal, who passed his days in a state of agitation, and his nights without sleep, dreading by turns to be anticipated by the spontaneous rising of his army, or to be made the accomplice of its insurrection.

On the night of the 13th, he summoned around him, in succession, Bourmont, Lecourbe, Faverney, Clouet, and Du-

grivel, the commandant of the National Guard of Lons-le-Saulnier, and partly disclosing to them the distraction of his soul, seemed involuntarily to endeavour to instigate these his confidants, to a resolution which should encourage that which he had already formed and drawn up in secret, in the shape of a proclamation to the troops, but which he had not yet decided on carrying into execution. Lecourbe refused all compromise with his honour, Faverney became indignant, Clouet spoke of retiring rather than give way to the sedition of the soldiery, Dugrivel said he would answer for the loyalty of the National Guard; Bourmont alone, according to a statement, the truth of which the marshal attested before God a few hours before his death, read the proclamation, discussed it without astonishment or anger, inclining on several points to the ideas of the marshal, and not checking him with sufficient energy, received the order to muster the troops on the following day, and executed it without remark.

XVII.

The object of this general review of the troops was, notwithstanding, still an enigma to the generals, confidants of the marshal, to his aides-de-camp, and apparently to himself. It is probable that he wished to ascertain their sentiments by their demeanour in a solemn muster, or that he desired that their open, spontaneous, and irresistible defection, should be a pretext for his own, and stifle the voice of his own conscience beneath that of the army. He thus sought for an excuse beforehand, not from their treachery, but from their frailty. Such was the review of the 14th, at Lons-le-Saulnier

XVIII.

All the troops being formed in square on the immense Place d'Armes of the town, the marshal appeared in the midst of it, surrounded by his staff, and wearing on his uniform the grand star of the legion of honour, with the effigy of

Napoleon. His generals, his officers, the soldiers and the authorities present, regarded him in gloomy anxiety, for this unusual assemblage of the troops could have no other object than a great manifestation of their devotion, or of defection from their honour. Everything was to be expected, but the greater part of the spectators could never have imagined that the signal and cry of infidelity would come from the heart and mouth of one who was surnamed by the army, "the bravest of the brave." Ney himself seemed to hesitate, to wait for, or by his delay, endeavour to draw from the army a burst of impatience, which should anticipate him, and palliate his error. He afterwards declared that even death would have been a means of escape from his perplexity of mind much to be desired, and upbraided Bourmont and Lecourbe for not having struck him dead on the spot, so deeply did he feel that remorse was more to be dreaded than an anticipated expiation of his military crime.

At last, after having in vain waited for a cry from the troops either in favour of the King or in favour of Bonaparte to break the silence which seemed to weigh heavily on the crowd, fancying that he saw in the looks of the soldiers that obedience might draw them from their duty, he took upon himself the fatal part of opening the way for that insurrection which he expected, and to command the defection rather than appear to obey it. As it is ever the case in deeds which are contrary to duty, he did not even moderate within the limits of decency, the manner and words in which he declared his infidelity, but passing without gradation or propriety from fidelity to abuse, he insulted the cause which he deserted.

"Soldiers," said he, drawing from his breast a paper which he had concealed there the day before, and which he had read during the night to Bourmont and Lecourbe, as a hypothetical proclamation sent from Lyons or Macon, and with regard to which he had sounded their opinion; "soldiers, the cause of the Bourbons is for ever lost. The legitimate dynasty which the French nation has adopted, is about to re-ascend the throne; it is to the Emperor Napoleon, our sovereign, that the sole right of reigning over our beautiful country belongs.

Whether the Bourbon nobility again determine on expatriating themselves, or consent to live amongst us, matters not! The sacred cause of liberty and of our independence will no longer suffer from their fatal influence. They have tried to vilify our military glory, but have found themselves mistaken; for that glory is the result of labours which are too noble to allow of their remembrance ever being lost to us. Soldiers! those times are now past in which people were governed by the suppression of their rights. Liberty is at last triumphant, and Napoleon, our august Emperor, is about to consolidate it for ever. Henceforward, may this glorious cause be ours, and that of all Frenchmen; and may all the brave men whom I have the honour of commanding, be impressed with this great truth.

"Soldiers! I have often led you to victory; I am now going to lead you to that immortal phalanx, which the Emperor Napoleon is conducting to Paris, where it will be in a few days, and there our hope and happiness will be for ever realized. 'Vive l'Empereur!'

"The Marshal of the Empire,

"PRINCE DE LA MOSKOWA.

'Lons-le-Saulnier, the 13th of March, 1815"

XIX

The excitement of the troops scarcely allowed the marshal to finish the reading of the proclamation. A tremendous shout of "Vive l'Empereur" issued from the soldiery, and a military tumult broke the ranks and violated all discipline. The faithful and indignant officers, who took no part in the frenzy of this armed riot, were insulted and threatened by their own soldiers. The royalist inhabitants of the town and of the Jura looked on in consternation at this disgraceful scene. The commandant of the National Guard, Dugrivel, fearlessly displaying his abhorrence of the disloyalty of the army, broke his sword before the troops and the marshal, and threw the fragments at the feet of the tribune of sedition. Lecourbe sorrowfully went away, murmuring as he passed through the crowd of people from the Jura who respected in him

their own fame. The republican friends of Rouget de Lisle, the author of the *Marseillaise*, who had retired to Lons-le-Saulnier, his birth-place, united with the royalists in deploring this betrayal of the cause of liberty, and the sacrifice of their country at the altar of an individual. Clouet, Faverney, and almost all the officers of the staff and of the provincial volunteers, separated themselves sorrowfully from the marshal, and withdrew to carry with them to their homes or to Paris their feelings of shame and despair, at the sight of an army thus lost to all sense of duty at the voice of its chief. Bourmont remained silent and obedient, without conveying to his commanding officer any public sign either of approbation or disapprobation, during the first few hours, and contenting himself with uniting with the followers of the King in their lamentations. He even appeared at the civil and military banquet that the troops gave to the marshal after the review, and at which the defection of the day was celebrated with seditious rejoicings. The soldiers, witnesses of, and participators in this want of discipline, thus encouraged by their chiefs, spread themselves tumultuously throughout the town, and carried the licentiousness and inebriety of insubordination far into the night. Such an example did more to corrupt the French army than ten defeats. The sedition of the people is quelled by the soldier, that of the soldier by his commanding officer, but the sedition of the chief can only be checked by the disorganization of the social body, and the disasters of the country.

XX.

The defection of Ney deprived the Bourbons of all means of resistance, opened all the roads to Paris to the Emperor, secured him against all pursuit on the part of the armies of the South, who still remained faithful, and was about to increase his forces on the road to Auxerre by the addition of all the regiments of the army of Franche-Comte, which Ney hastened to send after him to reinforce and render him invincible.

Napoleon, when at Macon, had judged correctly of the versatility of his former lieutenant. "Flatter him," said he to Bertrand, "but do not caress him, or he will think that I fear him!" In that town he received an emissary of the conspirators at Paris, who was commissioned to give him a verbal report of the civil and military measures taken by the King and the Chambers, to oppose to him the resistance of the nation. "The King," this confidant said to him, "is sure of the National Guard, and of the numerous and brave young men who form his military guard; he has sworn to wait for you and defy you at the Tuileries." "If he likes to wait for me," the Emperor replied, "I have no objection, but I very much doubt that he will do so; the boasts of the emigrants are lulling him into security; but when I am twenty leagues from Paris, they will abandon him, as the nobility of Lyons did the Count d'Artois. What can he do with the superannuated men who surround him? The butt-end of the musket of one of my grenadiers, would put to flight a hundred of them. The National Guard talk loudly at a distance; but when I am at the gates they will be silent, for civil war is not their trade. Go! return to Paris, and tell my friends to wait and keep quiet, and that in ten days' time, my grenadiers will mount guard at the doors of the Tuileries."

XXI.

On the 14th, he slept at Chalons-sur-Saône, an excitable town, which had signalised itself by a resistance to the invasion, worthy of the memory of St. Jean de Losne, and which the long wars of the Empire had favoured more than any other part of France, as the internal storehouse of the merchandise thrown back by the continental blockade. He was received there as the genius of war and the fortune of the country. The people presented him with the cannon and artillery waggons forwarded from Paris, and intended for the army of Ney to be used against him. The volunteers of the free corps, who, under the command of three gentlemen of these provinces, M. de Moncroc, M. de Forbin Janson, and M. Gustave de Damas, Vendeans by birth, had a few months before fought with the

greatest daring against the columns of the Austrian army, were presented to him, and received their reward in a few expressions of remembrance and of glory. The bourgeoisie and magistracy of the town withdrew themselves into a state of reserve and coolness which here and everywhere appeared to indicate the repulsive feeling of France towards him. He complained of the absence of the mayor, and sent one of his officers to request him to appear before him and take the oath of allegiance, affecting to fear the resentment of the populace against him, after his departure. "No," replied this inflexible magistrate, in the midst of the municipal councillors who shared in his firmness, "I admire Napoleon as a warrior—I have served him as Emperor, and after his abdication have taken the oath of allegiance to another sovereign; that sovereign is still alive and fighting in France, and I will not violate the fidelity which I have sworn to him."

The Emperor, compelled by his position to punish the fulfilment of duty and to encourage revolt, dismissed this good man from his office.

XXII

He marched with all the rapidity to which he could urge his column of the island of Elba, in order to baffle resistance by the celerity of his movements; and his army traversed in two rainy days the long and mountainous road from Chalons-sur-Saône to Avallon. He was now in the heart of that table-land of Upper Burgundy, where the errant, bold, and martial race, inured to war for centuries, and hardened by the elasticity of the climate, had furnished him his most numerous and inexhaustible recruitings. He was received there as in a camp by the peasants, who were intoxicated with the glory of his name and standard, the women even contending with the men to form part of the guard of honour at his hotel. A staff officer of Ney's army arrived in haste during the night bringing to the Emperor the confirmation of the expected defection of the marshal. The Emperor read the proclamation, made a few corrections in it, to adapt it to his views, and to the public opinion of the depart-

ments and of Paris, and had it printed and distributed before him on the Auxerre road. The news of this defection, couched in such terms, elated his partisans, discouraged his enemies, and smoothed everything on his way. Ney, in the letter which contained his proclamation, informed Bertrand that he was going to join the Emperor at Auxerre.

XXIII.

The Emperor not finding the marshal there, felt uneasy for a moment on the score of his irresolution. The prefect of Auxerre was the brother-in-law of the marshal, and the first prefect of the Bourbons who did not withdraw from before Napoleon, and who acknowledged him as his sovereign; but this civil defection of a relation of Ney's, and without doubt a participator in his opinions and fortunes, was not sufficient to reassure the Emperor. "What can he be doing? Why does he delay? What can detain him?" he exclaimed every moment, still feeling that the fate of his enterprise was involved in the irresolution or the repentance of his accomplice. However, at eight o'clock in the evening Ney arrived; and demanded, as if to punish himself for his rudeness at Fontainebleau, and devotion to the cause of the Bourbons, not to be required to appear before the Emperor until he should have had time to collect his ideas and write out his justification. "What need have I that he should justify himself?" replied the Emperor to the prefect who announced to him the arrival of his brother-in-law; "tell him that all is forgotten, that I still love him, and that my arms are as open to receive him to-night as they will be to-morrow." On awaking the following morning, he received the marshal in his arms, and said to him with emotion: "I desire neither justification nor explanation between us; for me you are still 'the bravest of the brave!'" "Sire," replied the marshal, who felt oppressed with a sense of the notoriety which his promise to bring back his Emperor and friend in an iron cage had obtained throughout France, "the public journals have published most infamous versions of my conduct, to which I desire to give the lie; for my words and deeds have always

been those of a good soldier and a good citizen!" "I know it," replied Napoleon, "and have therefore never doubted your devotion to my person." But Ney, who already trembled lest his guilty act should appear in the light of a piece of personal and interested servility to the man, feeling the necessity of being beforehand with this interpretation of his conduct, and colouring his weakness with the hue of patriotism, interrupted the current of the Emperor's thoughts, and said with dignified emphasis: "Sire, you were right in doing so; your Majesty may always rely on me, when the welfare of my country is at stake My blood has already flowed for my country, and for my country I am prepared to shed it to the last drop." The Emperor understood the emphasis, the gesture, the intention and embarrassment implied in the audacity of these words, and interrupting in his turn the speech of the marshal, lest it should lead him to say more than it was fit he should hear in public: "It is patriotism also," said he to Ney, "which has brought me back to France. I learnt that the country was unhappy, and have come to deliver it from the Bourbons. I came to give it all that it expects from me!" "Your Majesty," replied the marshal, "may rest assured of our support. With justice, anything may be done with this people. The Bourbons were ruined by having given the army cause for dissatisfaction. Princes," he continued, "who never saw a naked sword, but who were humbled by, and jealous of our glory, and continually sought to humiliate us! I feel indignant still when I think that a marshal of France, that an old warrior, such as I am, was obliged to bend the knee before the Duke de Berry," (and he coupled the name of the young prince with an insulting epithet), "to receive the order of a knight of St. Louis! Such a state of things could not last, and if you had not hastened to our assistance, we were about to drive them away ourselves." The Emperor felt that the marshal in his excitement was trying to atone for the abuse of himself to the Bourbons a few days before, by now abusing those very Bourbons, and changing the conversation, asked Ney how his army felt disposed. "Excellently, Sire," replied the marshal. "I thought that the troops would have smothered me, when I showed them your eagles." "Who are

your generals?" resumed Napoleon. "Lecourbe and Bourmont." "Are you sure of them?" "I will answer for Lecourbe," but I am not sure of Bourmont." "Why are they not here?" "They appeared to hesitate and I left them behind me." "Have them arrested, as also all the royalist officers, until my entry into Paris; they must not disturb my triumph. I shall be there on the 20th or the 25th, if we reach it, as I hope without a battle. Do you think the Bourbons will defend themselves?" "No; I think not," replied Ney; "you know these people of Paris make more noise than they do work." "I have received news this morning, from my correspondent in Paris," said the Emperor; "my friends are prepared to rise in arms, and I fear that a struggle may ensue between them and the royalists. I would not have a drop of blood shed to stain my return. The means of communication with the capital are open, write to our friends and to Maret; say that all are clearing the way before my steps, or rallying around me, and that I will reach Paris without having fired a musket shot."

Labédoyère, whose defection had been the signal for all the others, having preceded that of Ney, and whose soul began to be goaded with the same feelings of remorse, was present at this interview, and endeavoured, like his chief, to cover the difficulty and ambiguity of his position with boasts of patriotism. Napoleon left them, to write ostentatiously to the Empress, with the view of spreading around him the appearance of an understanding between Austria and himself, which did not exist; and after despatching couriers to Vienna, who were never meant to arrive there, superintended the embarkation on the river of his soldiers of the island of Elba, who were much harassed by so long a march, as also that of several regiments destined to form his advanced guard towards Fontainebleau and Melun. He stopped all the couriers from Paris, and opened the despatches and private letters, for the purpose of ascertaining through the medium of family secrets the fears or hopes of all hearts in the capital. He learnt from these correspondences that his person was proscribed, and that his life would not be safe on approaching Paris. He suffered his officers to redouble their vigilance around his person; but feeling uneasy at the state of

excitement of his troops, who longed to come to blows with the royalist troops, and fearing that should the war commence, it would not prove so favourable as the astonishment and panic which fought for him, he dictated the following words for General Cambronne, who commanded his advanced guard: "General Cambronne, I confide to your charge my most brilliant campaign. The French all await me with impatience; you will find nothing but friends everywhere. Do not fire a single musket shot. I desire that my crown should not cost the French a single drop of blood!"

He then advanced on the road to Montereau

XXIV.

The table-land of Montereau, where the Emperor had fought his last fortunate battle against the Austrians, and the woody heights which command the road to Fontainebleau on the opposite bank of the Seine, were chosen by the Duke de Berry, for the position of the royal army which was to wait for and encounter the column of the Emperor. Some feeble detachments of the King's military household, devoted and intrepid in spirit, but few in numbers, had been despatched to Montereau, and incorporated with the regiments of infantry and cavalry of the old army, to induce a fraternization of arms. The army being thus imprudently hazarded outside of Paris, and near those eagles which fascinated the eye and heart of the soldier, maintained a passive and motionless bearing; but no sooner did the regiment of hussars, which occupied the bank and quay of Montereau, perceive Cambronne's skirmishers, than they broke forth into a shout of "Vive l'Empereur!" tore off their white cockades, held forth their hands to welcome the soldiers of the island of Elba, and adding outrage to defection, dashed, at full gallop, and sabre in hand, on a few hundred of cavaliers of the King's household, their comrades in the camp, exchanged a few sabre cuts and pistol shots with these brave young men, and formed themselves at the head of the insurgent army which they had been ordered to oppose. All the regiments on the two roads of Melun and Fontainebleau followed the current

of sedition, and flocked to the army of the Emperor, as that army approached them in their positions; and the officers, colonels, and generals, carried away themselves, were compelled to become the accomplices of their troops. Emissaries, who were almost all Polish officers, had been posted in all the towns and villages in which the regiments had been quartered. These Poles, a wandering, turbulent, and servile race, had no respect for the dignity of the country, and nothing to lose in the event of its ruin; but being warriors and brave men, they worshipped in Napoleon the god of war, and fomented through all the corps that spirit of dissension which is their native genius. They were the most active promoters of the disorganisation at Montereau, as well as at Lyons, and have ever since been found mixed up in all the tumults of our revolutions, as civil or military firebrands, according to the civil or military character of the revolution. In short, revolutions seem their native element.

XXV.

On receiving the news of the dispersion of the first corps which occupied the table-land of Melun on the right, and the passes of the forest of Fontainebleau on the left, Napoleon's joy knew no bounds. He desired to conquer, but for him to conquer without fighting was doubly to conquer, and would prove to Europe that his enterprise was not a desperate attempt to obtain the sovereignty; but rather an act of compliance with the wish of a whole nation. He appointed General Gérard, one of the generals who had rejoined him on his march, as commandant of his advanced guard, instead of Cambronne, in order that his companions of the island of Elba might appear to be welcomed and treated with distinction beneath the walls of Paris by their comrades in France, and their march thus have the appearance of a triumphal procession, rather than of a campaign. Gérard received orders to avoid all collision with the troops of the King, whose disorganisation operated in his favour more surely and less criminally.

"I am informed," said the Emperor in his letter to General

Gérard, "that your troops, hearing of the decree of proscription against me, have resolved, by way of reprisal, to lay violent hands on the royalists whom they may encounter. You will meet with none but Frenchmen, whom I forbid you to fight with. Calm your soldiers, contradict the reports which exasperate them, and tell them that I would not enter my capital at their head if their arms were stained with blood."

At Fossard, a little hamlet, with a post-house, on the road to Fontainebleau, couriers from Lyons brought him the news of the rising of the South against him, the formation of the army of Massena at Marseilles, and the march of the army of the Duke d'Angoulême on Valence and Lyons, to cut off his retreat, and following in his track, to re-conquer the provinces traversed by him. Neglecting these distant dangers, he pressed on towards Paris, feeling assured that the armies opposed to him would break up of their own accord when they heard of his triumph in the centre of the empire.

At some distance from Fossard, the cavalry of the Duke de Berry, which was drawn up in order of battle on the road to Fontainebleau, and had hitherto been steady and obedient, broke its ranks, disregarded the voice of its commanders, and of its own accord marched to meet the Emperor. Colonel Moncey, son of the marshal of that name, and who, although attached to Napoleon by sentiments of gratitude, felt the superior claims of duty and of honour, was the only officer who succeeded in restraining the regiment of hussars that he commanded, from following in the track of the other corps, and withdrawing them across the fields from the line of march to prevent them from sharing in the general delirium, he retired towards Orleans. The soldiers followed their colonel, who burned with shame at the guilty conduct of the army, but their esteem for their brave commander was limited to the observance of neutrality; and after leaving the road over which Napoleon was to pass, they returned to it to shout "Vive l'Empereur," in order that Moncey might understand that their affections were divided between him and Napoleon, and that although their hearts yearned towards their colonel their secret wishes were for the Emperor.

XXVI.

The road from Fontainebleau to Paris, which lay through the forest, and was so easy to defend, was thus laid open for want of defenders; a few scattered and consequently useless detachments of body guards being the only troops on whom any reliance could now be placed, were dispersed from station to station, with orders to carry intelligence to court of the progress of the rapidly-increasing and almost universal defection

The Emperor having allowed time for the army of the King to join his line of march, and for the grenadiers of the island of Elba to precede him at Fontainebleau and Melun, got into his carriage at nightfall, under the escort of only 200 horsemen, commanded by Colonel Germanouski, Colonel Duchamp, and Captain Raoul, besides a few Poles, who, after the fashion of those ancient Germans whom the Emperors attached to their fortunes and maintained against the people of Rome, marched, sabre in hand, at his carriage wheels. This cortege was illuminated with torches, and the day began to dawn as Napoleon, amidst the acclamations of his escort, entered the great solitary court-yard of that same palace of Fontainebleau which had been the scene of his abdication a few months before. His features expressed neither astonishment, awe, nor joy, and he looked as if he was re-entering the palace of his ancestors. The palace was deserted and uninhabited; the apartments which he had occupied in the zenith of his glory were unfurnished; the servants either absent or asleep; and all the usages of occupation interrupted by his short exile. While his apartments and bed were being prepared with all haste for his reception, he walked through the gardens, rooms and galleries of the chateau, to observe the changes that the lapse of time, or the new princes had made in his favourite residence, and express his approval or indignation to his companions of the island of Elba, as if the Bourbons had been nothing more than temporary and intrusive guests in the palace of Francis the First. He then took up his abode for one night in the small apartments in which he

had formerly endured the rigours of fate, and where he now enjoyed the sweets of his return, dictated the marching orders for the different corps of the army on the following day, which he himself intended to spend in this residence, and then went to sleep, guarded by the same soldiers, now encamped in the same courts, from whence they had issued a few months before to accompany him on the way to his place of exile.

BOOK NINETEENTH.

Indignation of Paris against Napoleon—The Count d'Artois reviews the National Guard—News of the march of Napoleon—Royalist demonstrations in Paris.—Council of the King and Ministers—Ordonnance to close the sitting of the Chambers—Departure of the King in the night of the 20th of March—Proclamations of M. de Chabrol and of M. Bellart—General Excelmans—Entry of Napoleon into Paris—Military Ovation—Coolness of the Parisians—Interview between Napoleon and Cambacérès—He creates his Ministry—Address of the Council of State—Adhesion of Benjamin Constant—The Emperor forms his Military Household—Reviews—Flight of Louis XVIII.—His arrival at Lille—Defection of the Garrison—The King abandons Lille and establishes himself at Ghent—The Count d'Artois at Béthune—He passes into Belgium—Entry of the Imperial Army into Béthune—Rising of La Vendée—The Army of Napoleon stops the Insurrection—The Duke and Duchess d'Angoulême at Bordeaux—The Duke leaves for the South at the intelligence of the landing of Bonaparte—Council held by the Duchess d'Angoulême—March of General Clausel on Bordeaux—Battle of the Bridge of the Dordogne—Defection of the Garrison of Blaye—Interview between General Clausel and M. de Martignac—Capitulation of Bordeaux—Resistance of the Duchess d'Angoulême—Defection of the Troops—Departure of the Duchess from Bordeaux—She goes to England and rejoins Louis XVIII. at Ghent—Protest of M. Lainé—Operations of the Duke d'Angoulême in the South—Defection of a portion of his army—Battles of Montélimart, Loriol, and of the Bridge of the Drôme—The Royal Army establishes itself at Valence—It falls back on Pont Saint Esprit—The Duke d'Angoulême is hemmed in at Lapalu—He Capitulates—He is arrested by Grouchy, and sent to Spain—Letter from Napoleon to Grouchy.

I.

PARIS took no part whatever in the purely soldier-like enthusiasm which carried away the whole army in the footsteps of Napoleon, and the nearer he approached and threatened to bend the national will to his own by the aid of his immense mob of soldiers, the greater was the energy and indignation of civil feeling, with which all hearts were inspired, and this

indignation against the rule of an armed Dictator, who was forcing himself upon the country, resolved itself into a conscientious adhesion to, and an enthusiastic feeling of compassion for the King. All pitied this prince thus disarmed and threatened, and having nothing left with which to oppose the genius of war and despotism, and dispute with him a people and a throne, but the institutions, laws, and ancient rights adapted to the spirit and manners of the time by a fresh contract. All were affected at the sight of his white hairs, his age, and constancy, his past misfortunes, those of the princes of his house, and, above all, those of the Duchess d'Angoulême, about to be involved in his fall or his banishment, and swore to fight and die for him. These oaths were universal and sincere; and all grades of opinion, from republicanism to the superstition of the antique race of kings, united, from various motives, in the same sentiment of horror and malediction against the disturber of Europe. But one opinion prevailed throughout the newspapers, the cafés, the public places, gardens, squares, and streets. Strangers accosted each other and conversed without restraint on the subject, sure, beforehand, of having to do with an enemy of Bonaparte. The youths of the public schools, who are very numerous in Paris, and who in every crisis indicate the true state of opinion in their families and homes, usually the first to be carried away by novelty, rose of their own free will against the attempt of the enemy of all liberty, and formed themselves into active and intrepid battalions of volunteers to defend Paris, the Charter, and the King. In their ranks were included, without a single exception, all the men who have since distinguished themselves either in literature, in science, at the bar, or in the tribune. They armed themselves for the defence of the Thermopylæ of the Constitution, with the profession of faith of patriotism, and the liberalism of their lives. Odilon Barrot, worthy of his sire, marched in the first rank. These volunteers had asked to be permitted to go forth from Paris and offer themselves first to the blows of Napoleon's soldiers, resolved to defy them to immolate the flower of the youth of France, and to die protesting by their death against the slavery of their country.

II.

The National Guard burned with the same enthusiasm for liberty through all its ranks. The citizens of which it was composed, all of them either sons, or heads and fathers of families, and for the most part subsisting by the produce of their labour and industry, being obliged to remain at home for the protection of their wives and children, were unable, like the rich and independent youth of the schools, to leave the walls of Paris for a long campaign; but if the remainder of the army drawn up at Villejuif had done its duty, the Emperor would have found the whole capital in arms at the gates of Paris to dispute with him the possession of their native land.

The Count d'Artois, commander-in-chief of the National Guard, reviewed them on the 17th, and the acclamations which arose from the ranks, the number of volunteers to join the line, and the tears shed on the occasion, proved that every house in Paris and its suburbs contained an enemy to Napoleon. The body guards, musketeers, and light dragoons of the King's household, to the number of 4,000, had of their own accord hurried to Paris from their different garrisons, or from the bosoms of their families, and, devoted to the death, burned to encounter the army of Napoleon, without stopping to calculate the number and superiority of its forces. They consisted of the sons of all the nobility and principal citizens of France, and were thoroughly imbued with a feeling of honour and fidelity to the Bourbons. Many amongst them had served in the choice corps of Napoleon, but not one of them betrayed the least sign of weakness or irresolution in this hour of peril, and they only murmured at their state of inactivity in Paris. They surrounded the palace of the Tuileries as with a rampart of human hearts; they filled the barracks of the Quay d'Orsay and the Military School, and were encamped in the Champs-Elysées, demanding loudly that the King or the princes should put their courage to the test, and lead them forth against the insurgent regiments. The King, however, would not consent that the blood of so many families, who would be

sacrificed in their sons, should be uselessly shed in a cause which he, notwithstanding the hopes still entertained by those around him, now looked upon as lost.

III

"The palace of the Tuileries was filled with false reports and hopes of a speedy triumph, and the captains of the guards, the Duke de Blacas, and the ministers appeared tranquil and confident. The Duke de Feltre, as he crossed the hall of the marshals, said to the young officers of the King's military household: "You have not slept for eight days; but you may now take your rest, for I shall sleep as tranquilly to-night as I did three months ago. General Marchand has re-entered Grenoble, re-possessed himself of his artillery, and is on his march, followed by an army. Desertion has commenced in the troops of the usurper. Lyons threw off the yoke as soon as the garrison had evacuated the town, and Marshal Ney advances with 30,000 men on his flank. The army before Paris is incorruptible, and Paris will be the rock on which Napoleon's hopes will be wrecked!" These reports were believed, spread about, and exaggerated, but an hour afterwards the general consternation showed that truer intelligence had arrived in the city. Every heart was by turns oppressed with anxiety, or elated with confidence. The events of a century seemed crowded into these eight days of expectation and confusion, but none relaxed in their devotion to the cause of the Bourbons, which for the time had become the cause of the country and of liberty; for it was universally feared that the return of Bonaparte to the city of revolution would throw back for a century those institutions but just restored to the people

IV

Above all, M. de Blacas, who was more ignorant than any one of the real feeling of an army of which he knew nothing, except through the medium of English newspapers, which were opposed to its spirit, and incredulous as to its fanaticism, could not bring

himself to believe that Bonaparte would ever dare to brave the national feeling of repulsion which he beheld displayed at Paris in the Chambers and in the Tuileries. He continued to re-assure the King, and to smile at the sinister forebodings which were communicated to him day and night, by men who were better informed as to the state of affairs. "He will not dare," said he; "the King of France surrounded by his people, the representatives of the country, and the nobility, shall not be affronted in the Tuileries by a soldier proscribed from the throne and from the country."

Louis XVIII. himself could hardly believe in so much audacity, and talked of awaiting Bonaparte and his accomplices with ancient intrepidity seated on his throne, and there defying him with all the majesty of age and of right. M. Lainc, a man of that civic stamp, the models of which are to be found in Plutarch, animated the representatives with his indomitable heroism, and made them swear to die on the steps of the throne, ranged around their constitutional King; Marshal Mar mont also advised measures of desperate courage; recommending that the princes should be sent to the army of Ney, whose defection was not yet known, that Franche-Comté should be aroused on the one side, and La Vendeé on the other, that the South should be called upon to march with the Duke d'Angoulême, the Tuileries fortified and defended by the laws and with arms, and a unanimous insurrection of the capital relied on, which should overwhelm the aggressor beneath the reprobation of the whole nation; such were the resolutions offered to the King by the fidelity of this marshal, while councils still followed councils, and nothing appeared to indicate in the attitude of the King the despair of his cause, or the idea of abandoning Paris—much less France.

V.

Intelligence having arrived on the night of the 19th and 20th of March, of the final defection of the royal army, the cuirassiers at Melun, and the lancers and hussars at Fossard,

the retreat of the body guards, attacked and pursued by their companions in arms, and the nocturnal entry of Napoleon into Fontainebleau, all remaining possibility or hope of resistance was dispelled, and those generals who still remained faithful, being summoned to the council, declared that the military sedition had taken their arms out of their hands, and that Paris was now at the mercy of Napoleon's army.

The King still hesitated, and continued to hesitate until the close of the day, for he could not believe that a nation, so proud and free, and so devoted to his cause as France appeared to be, would suffer it to be recorded in history that they had given themselves up to a handful of soldiers, commanded by a chief who was proscribed by Europe. The skirmishers of Napoleon's army were already at the gates of Paris, and the regiments of reserve encamped at Villejuif had already trampled their white cockades beneath their feet, and re-assumed the colours of Napoleon; but still this prince talked of resistance and refused to prepare for flight. Meanwhile, in the afternoon, the volunteers of the schools, the musketeers, and the life guards received orders from their officers to draw themselves up in order of battle on the Place de la Concorde, in the Carrousel, and in the Champs-Elysées, under the pretext of a march on Melun to give battle to the troops of Bonaparte. This promise of battle was responded to by the troops with a unanimous burst of enthusiasm, and their royalist blood boiled with impatience to be shed in the cause of their fathers. They bivouacked the whole night in the rain and mud at the different stations which were assigned to them. The people of all ranks who surrounded them burned with indignation against the army and against Bonaparte, encouraging them by their voices and gestures, lighting fires for them, bringing them provisions, asking them for arms to enable them to assist, and showing how completely their hearts were with them in their cause.

VI.

While these sincere and unanimous demonstrations were going on without, in the public places, and in the ranks of the

defenders of the throne, a last council was convoked at the Tuileries. The ministers, marshals, and generals, M. Lainé, president of the Chamber of Deputies, and all the public or private councillors of the crown were assembled in the presence of the King, the princes, and the Duchess d'Augoulême. No one for a moment entertained a thought of the King's leaving France; but to evacuate Paris, and thus prevent a civil massacre in which the country would suffer no less than the cause of legitimate royalty, and to retire with the corps of his military household, the volunteers, and the troops of the west and north, into some loyal provincial stronghold, around which he might rally the nation, and await the assistance of Europe still in arms, was the idea which presented itself to all minds, and the feeling of every heart. Some proposed Rochelle, a town surrounded on the one side by provinces devoted to his cause, and on the other by the ocean, which would allow of communications with England, and the arrival of reinforcements from thence. Others proposed Havre, Calais, Dunkirk, and Lille; and this last-named town which was impregnable, adjoining Belgium, and commanding the department of the north, that nursery of soldiers, and patient determined Vendee of the ancient Flemish provinces, was chosen by the King. It contained a strong garrison of troops who were kept to their duty by the royalism of the inhabitants, and who were commanded by the Duke de Trévise, a man of incorruptible honour, and possessing great influence over the troops, who looked upon him as the model of a soldier, the child of the republican camps, the companion of their campaigns under the Empire, and a pattern of fidelity to his duty under the new monarchy. Such a man, commanding such a province, and master of such a citadel under the eyes of his King, was well fitted to maintain him in France.

VII

On his return from Lyons, the Duke d'Orleans had been sent by the King to the troops of the North, who, for the most part, had belonged to the old Imperial Guard, for the purpose

of showing to them a prince of the Bourbon family, who was in a measure connected with the revolution. This prince, who had been the aide-de-camp of Dumouriez in these provinces during the Belgian wars, imagined that the people remembering the days of his youth would rise enthusiastically at his name. In his private interview with the King at the Tuileries he must have given very satisfactory pledges of his loyalty to induce the government in this extremity, to send him amongst those very troops which Lefèvre-Desnouttes, the Lallemands, and Drouet d'Erlon had conducted towards Paris, for the purpose of crowning him. His Lyons expedition had, however, discouraged all his serious hopes for the time, and he, in all probability, thought more of sowing the seeds of his future popularity in the army, than of maintaining a long and successful resistance against the enemy of his race.

The Duke de Bourbon obtained nothing beyond marks of respect, and oaths of fidelity in La Vendée. These provinces had not had time to arm themselves, and the course of events outstripped their enthusiasm.

VIII.

In the evening of the 19th of March, Louis XVIII. himself drew up, and imbued with the affliction of his soul, the preamble of the order in council by which he declared the close of the session of the Chambers, in order that the conqueror on entering Paris should not find in the existing national assemblies an engine of power, a pretext for the imposition of legal obedience on the country, or an instrument of servility. He, at the same time, convened a fresh session of these legislative bodies, during the invasion of the capital, in that town of the kingdom in which he should fix his residence. "We might," said the King, and he spoke the truth, "we might avail ourselves of the faithful and patriotic inclinations of the immense majority of the inhabitants of Paris, to dispute with the rebels the entrance of our capital; but we shudder at the prospect of the misfortunes of every description, that a combat within your walls would draw down on

Paris. We will retire to a distance and collect forces; we will go and seek, not for more loving and devoted subjects than the people of Paris, but for Frenchmen in a better position to declare themselves in favour of the good cause. Fear not, we will soon return to the midst of that people, to whom we will a second time bring hope, happiness, and peace!"

He at the same time authorised the Baron de Vitrolles, who was better adapted by his activity and daring to the requirements of conspiracy than those of government, to go as commissioner to Toulouse, for the purpose of rekindling and keeping up the spirit of resistance and insurrection against Bonaparte in the southern parts of the kingdom.

IX.

The resolution to depart formed in the Tuileries was still unknown in Paris. It was believed on the contrary that there would be a last attempt at resistance, and that a sortie would be made in the night by the Duke de Berry and the Count d'Artois, at the head of the 8,000 or 10,000 men of the King's household troops, the volunteers, and a few regiments of grenadiers, hussars and chasseurs of the royal guard, composed of the remains of the Imperial Guard, but unshaken in their *esprit de corps*, and their fidelity to the King and the princes. These together with the body guards, were reviewed before the close of the day, and an immense crowd of people pressed around the princes and marshals, exhorting the regiments to deserve well at the hands of France. These same people, as if they already had a presentiment of the nocturnal departure of the King, crowded through the gardens, court-yards and quays which surround the palace, and with their eyes upraised, and their hands pointing towards the balconies of the King's apartments, tried to distinguish his profile through the windows, watching the least movement of the figures that passed backwards and forwards within, and such indications or preparations in the movements of horses, of carriages, or escorts around the residence of the King, as would have betrayed an intention of departure. Towards the end of the day a report got abroad

that the King had resolved not to leave a people who gave him such proofs of their loyalty, and the crowd silently returned to their homes, in expectation of some sudden change of fortune which should retrieve that which now appeared to be lost. The King took advantage of this moment of solitude and silence to depart, for to do so in the open day would either have been impossible or too heart-rending, and the regrets and frenzy of the people would have led them to oppose the passage of their King. Never had Paris displayed so intense and overwhelming a sense of its misfortune, for the disasters of the inauspicious reign for which this departure opened the way cast their shadow over the minds of all.

X.

At the sight of the carriages which had been prepared in secret, and entered the court-yard at midnight, the officers of the National Guard, and the citizens who were under arms to guard the palace, rushed in disorder into the halls and staircases of the chateau as if to oppose the departure. Marshals, generals, officers, magistrates of Paris, youthful enthusiasts of the return, or old companions in the exile of the princes; men who had been newly enlisted by the charter, others who had been drawn to the palace by a conformity of sentiment, and participation in misfortune, courtiers, magistrates, tradesmen, peers and deputies, all keeping watch with sword or heart over the sovereign of their hopes and their remembrance, spread themselves in a state of confusion, of irritation, despair, and tears through the galleries and under the porticoes through which the liberal and peaceful monarchy was about to pass, and again withdraw from France. A depressed murmur muttered imprecations against the violator of the country, and stifled sobs arose from the breasts of all, while their faces, blanched with emotion, appeared still more livid and feverish in the reflected light of the torches carried for the journey by the servants and pages. The King at last appeared, and a thousand voices were raised, a thousand arms outstretched, a thousand heads bowed, and a thousand knees bent before him.

He walked with difficulty, leaning on the arm of the Duke de Blacas, and surrounded by the group of princes and their most intimate friends. His features, though undisturbed by fear, bore the traces of the tragic calamities of his house and country, and, as his look wandered with an expression of benign and sorrowful majesty over all those faces which he recognised and saluted with a slight inclination of his head, his humid eyes seemed to contain the tears of his people. Without speaking a word he passed through this line of followers, familiars, courtiers, and private citizens, who opened before him and closed after him, some darting forward and seizing his hands to kiss them, others touching the skirt of his coat as if to preserve an impression of his person; all breaking forth into lamentations and melting into tears, as if at the sepulture of a reign, or the death-bed of a father of the people. At the foot of the staircase a thousand swords were crossed over his head, as their owners swore to defend or to avenge him. At the last moment when about to leave the palace and step into his carriage an attempt was made to restrain him. "Spare me, my children," said he, "spare me the expression of the pain I feel as well as you at a separation which is necessary for the sake of France. I wish to preserve you for my own sake, and to preserve myself for yours. I will soon see you again, alas! under what auspices!" The Duke de Berry and the Count d'Artois assisted him into the carriage, closed the door, bowed and saw him depart. For fear of arousing attention or exciting a display of feeling on his way, the King would have no escort as far as St. Denis; and the inhabitants of the streets he traversed knew not that the carriage they beheld bore away a dynasty. A single officer of the mounted body guards followed the wheels of the King's carriage at a distance. The season was a severe one, the night tempestuous and dark, the rain beat against the windows, gusts of wind roared through the streets, and over the roofs of Paris, and the March sky seemed to share in the storms which agitated the court, the capital, and the people.

The Swiss of the guard who had been sent to the advanced-guard of the Duke de Berry on the way to Melun, being con-

sidered the most incorruptible corps, because they felt no interest in the quarrels of the nation, and also the most faithful, because they had to avenge the blood of their fathers and brothers shed on the 10th of August, 1792, fell back in pursuance of orders, on St. Denis, to protect the passage of the King. The prefect of Melun, like the prefect of Auxerre, had broken his oath, and offered his department to Bonaparte, and the only road open to the King was that of the north and west.

XI.

At the same moment. the regiments of the royal guard and the body guards drawn up in marching order on the Place de la Concorde, began to move under the orders of Marshal Marmont, commandant under the princes of the army destined to cover the retreat of the King, and rejoin him by forced marches at Lille. They were not aware of the departure of the King, and thought they were to march on Melun to encounter the columns of Bonaparte; and they only learnt the occurrence of the night, and their destination, on arriving at the gate of St. Denis, where they took the road to the north. The people of Paris, awakened by the noise of horses and arms, hurried in crowds, as they passed, to all the doors and windows which were lighted up in the anxiety of such a night. The men, women, and children bade them farewell in a most affecting manner, and recommended the King to their care, bringing them wine and provisions for their journey, as if all the families of Paris had recognised sons or brothers in these young men. The faubourgs, usually so excitable at the symptoms of revolution, appeared as gloomy and sorrowful as the wealthy quarters of the town; the people who inhabited them, impoverished by the long wars and exhausted by the conscriptions, beginning to experience the advantages of labour and industry restored to them by peace. Nevertheless, they liked the army, and did not feel so indignant as the bourgeoisie on its return to fidelity at the voice of its former chief; but they felt a presentiment of the disasters and disgrace which would attend a second invasion of Europe to quell this invasion

of glory. The people were, however, touched at the tragic scenes enacting in their native land, and nature influenced them at this moment more than politics. The King, abandoned by his army, betrayed by his generals, deprived of the throne, and proscribed from that native land in which he had hoped to end his days: his advanced years, his white hairs, his infirmities, that royal family which in a few days would perhaps have no asylum in Europe, the princess who would no longer be enabled even to visit the tomb of her father and mother at St. Denis, there to weep over her sad remembrances of the prison and the scaffold—the handsome and faithful youth of the King's military household, who exiled themselves from their families to follow the father of the country—this eventful night, the inauspicious weather, the tempest, the rain, the torch-light reflected on the arms; all these, affecting, ominous, and almost funereal circumstances, deeply moved the people, and seemed, in their eyes, to be the forerunners of some awful calamity, which was about to befall that city from which Napoleon had driven royalty, peace, and nature. Such was the departure of the King and his army in the night of the 20th of March.

Let us leave these scenes awhile, and return to Fontainebleau, where all these calamities were sources of triumph, and all these sorrows causes for joy.

XII.

Early in the morning, a courier from M. de Lavalette, one of the most active agents of Napoleon in Paris, and who had taken possession before daybreak of the Post-office, from which he expelled M. Ferrand, brought to Fontainebleau the so-much-desired news of the departure of the King. Napoleon blessed his good fortune which thus enabled him to avoid, not the danger, but the odium of entering the capital and palace sword in hand, and battering down the gates with his cannon. He summoned his chiefs and changed the order which he had given the day before to collect his army in force on Essonne. Madame Hamelin, an officious woman, who, eager for notoriety, was engaged in all the intrigues of the Bonaparte family, and

concealed the secrets of the conspiracy beneath an appearance of the volatility natural to her sex, wrote to him to accelerate his arrival in Paris. "To Paris this evening!" cried he: "the King and the princes have fled; I will sleep to-night in the Tuileries." "To Paris!" re-echoed his courtiers and his companions of the island of Elba. To Paris! was soon re-echoed by all the troops from regiment to regiment, and from outpost to outpost. The grenadiers of the island of Elba, and those fiery Poles who had promised themselves when on board the brig *Inconstant*, a triumphal and soldier-like entry into Paris, forgetting their fatigues, carried their arms lightly, hurried forward their horses, took possession of all the carts and carriages on the road, made the peasants and village-lads carry their knapsacks, and wanted to arrive by daylight at the gates of the capital, in order that the sun might shine on, and the people see their victorious return to the country.

Napoleon, however, restrained their eagerness, and forbade them to continue their march. More politic than impatient, he felt that the bearing of his personal guard, and the tumult which would follow the course of these grenadiers and Poles, who were intoxicated with boastings, would give his entry into Paris the appearance of a humiliating conquest of the capital by his soldiers. He wished to be preceded and accompanied by those bodies of the army which had set out to rejoin him, and had voluntarily deserted the cause of the Bourbons. Above all, he wished to avoid daylight, as he had done at Grenoble and at Lyons, either because he suspected some snare, or that the indignation of the people made him fear the desperation of a mob, or the arm of an assassin. He passed the whole morning of the 20th of March in receiving the congratulations of his adherents in Paris, who hastened to him to receive the reward of their services, and in walking about the library, galleries, and gardens of the chateau of Fontainebleau, merely to pass away the time. He only entered his carriage towards evening, accompanied by a small escort, but surrounded by a crowd of soldiers and people on their march, he passed over the hillocks of that forest which had in other days witnessed his luxury, and been the scene of his hunting parties.

His journey as far as Paris was one long career of triumphant sedition, in which the want of discipline, and the intoxication of the soldiery vied with the turbulence of the inhabitants of the disordered towns and villages. Night had fallen on Paris before he perceived its steeples and towers, and he had caused it to be reported that he would not arrive until the following day.

XIII.

The city, after the departure of the King, during the remainder of the night, and the whole day of the 20th of March, remained in that state of interregnum, inactivity, and stupor, which follows the shock of a great event as well with a people as with an individual. The instinctive force of cohesion, which for awhile sustains society after its foundations have been destroyed, alone governed the immense and agitated mass of the population of this great capital. This phenomenon, which is always to be observed in sudden and unexpected revolutions, has also another cause in the uncertainty of what may happen, and the fear that all men and public functionaries entertain for a few hours, lest they should be deceived by fortune, and ruin themselves by declaring too soon in favour of a cause which might not prove triumphant. Such was the state of Paris during this day of expectation. Bonaparte was certainly about to enter the Tuileries, but no one could believe that the King would leave France, and that this monarchy, which, accompanied by an army for its retinue, and followed by the regrets and tears of a nation, was about to throw itself into the bosom of the most royalist provinces, would be reduced in so short a time to beg an asylum in a foreign land.

XIV.

Nothing stirred in the city. There was no longer any government, and the people restrained themselves, as if divided between two feelings of equal influence. The prefect of Paris, that

same M. de Chabrol whom the King had kept in the office where he found him, and where Bonaparte in his turn was again about to find him, still held the reins of the municipal administration combined, as an exception, with that of the department. He did not follow the base example of those two prefects who had been appointed by the King, and who now placed their departments at the disposal of the King's enemy. He issued a courageous proclamation to the people, reminding them of their recent enthusiasm on the arrival of this pacific prince, and declaring beforehand his sense of the ingratitude and faithlessness of their conduct, if they were capable of proving false to the sentiments of fidelity so often sworn to the Bourbons, for the sake of a soldier who had rebelled against his country, and against his own act of abdication. This decisive proclamation he signed with his name, which was thus beforehand condemned to proscription, and affixed to the walls of Paris it was read during the whole of the 20th of March by the people with applause and with tears. The Municipal Council, a very popular authority, through the medium of M. Bellart, a man of right feeling, but liable to be carried to extremes, issued another proclamation full of defiance, of insults, and of maledictions against the usurper of the charter, the nation, and the throne; M. Bellart, unlike M. de Chabrol and M. Lainé, however, did not await the arrival of the soldier whom he defied, but proscribed himself after having published his imprecation. The ministers had either followed the King or withdrawn in different directions. The prefect of police, Bourrienne, a renegade from the intimacy of Napoleon to the police of the Bourbons, took to flight to escape the vengeance of his former master. The leading partisans of Napoleon began to show themselves during the day, but without any disturbance, and to possess themselves, either by their audacity, as in the case of M. de Lavalette, of the Post-office, or by means of an arrangement prudently made by M. Chabrol, of the principal offices of the government in Paris, to avoid the riots and disasters of a state of anarchy. Count de Montes quiou, who belonged to a family that was almost entirely devoted to Napoleon for the favours which had been lavished on it

during his reign, took the command of the National Guard instead of General Dessolles, who bore as great a hatred to Napoleon as Moreau, the former companion of his campaigns and his reverses. The National Guard, which was assembled at the close of day in the garden of the Tuileries, the court-yard of the chateau, and in the Carrousel, met without knowing whether they were to be called upon to protest against the invasion of the city, or to welcome the return of the Dictator. Being almost entirely composed of royalists, they with difficulty repressed their feelings of indignation while under arms, and tremendous murmurs of disapprobation arose from their ranks. Uncertain up to the last moment whether they should admit or repel the first bodies of troops who should attempt to occupy the Tuileries in the name of Napoleon, but, nevertheless, decided on giving them up to the army and its chief, as it was morally impossible to defend them, they were desirous that the political usurpation under which all good citizens groaned, should at least be accomplished in an orderly manner, without dishonouring the palace, or staining the city with blood.

XV

Such was the frame of mind of the National Guard, or armed citizens of Paris. The military partisans of Napoleon, who consisted of disbanded half pay officers, had been collected into a body for some days past at St. Denis, prepared to break forth at the proper time on the retreat of the King, to entice the troops from their fidelity, and imitate in Paris the example set them by the defection of Labédoyère and his regiment at Grenoble, and that of General Brayer, the renegade commandant of Lyons. But having been hitherto kept in check by the presence of the body guard, the volunteers of the public schools, the Swiss, and the regiments of the guard, the last columns of which did not leave St. Denis, where they had passed the night, until the morning of the 20th of March, these officers, who were gathered together to form the nucleus of the military sedition, did not break forth until the middle of the day. They were commanded by General Excelmans,

an intrepid and adventurous soldier, and thorough-bred military tribune, formed by nature to win over camps, and gifted with a tall figure, an open countenance, a martial bearing, and a warmth of heart and soul that vented itself in fiery eloquence. A seditious camp was thus formed at the gates of Paris, in which were concentrated all the feelings of discontent, humiliation, and revenge of the whole army. The numerous disbanded soldiers of the neighbourhood, proud to see their chiefs and their colours once more, and to appear to share in the glory by aiding in the rebellion, crowded around this battalion of officers. The variable and fluctuating mob of the suburbs of a large city, a class always contaminated by misery and turbulence, and ever ready to follow the current of sedition, from whatsoever quarter it may flow, swelled the flood of Napoleon's forerunners at St. Denis, and rushed with their cockades, their colours, their imperial decorations, their well-known and popular uniforms, with laurels in their hands, and eagles displayed on the tops of pikes, from La Villette to the Boulevards, amidst loud cries of "Vive l'Empereur," to which they urged and instigated the people on their way through the long and extensive suburbs which extend from Charenton to St. Denis. They were recruited on their road by the scum of men, women, and children, guided by curiosity, and attracted by tumult, who belong to that class of the population that has no home but the street. This procession, although numerous and noisy, did not arouse the mass of settled and hard-working people to revolt; but, like an invading column of a half-military and half democratic character, appeared to pass through the town without mingling with the inhabitants. In the faces of the latter were openly expressed the feelings of sorrow, shame, and even anger, that pervaded those quarters in which this soldiery and mob raised the shouts, while the shops and windows were closed as they passed along, and Paris protested against them by its silence and solitude.

XVI

The curious and uud lating crowd of the other suburbs of

the east, west, and south of Paris, and the few partisans of the Emperor in the quarters of the interior, had been accumulated since the morning by their instinctive taste for grand spectacles, and their curiosity to see that man who shook the world, re-enter the palace of his glory on the shoulders of his dear grenadiers. This scene, one of the most pathetic in history, could not fail to attract thousands of spectators. Even those who had rejoiced at the fall of the great gladiator of the European arena, desired to witness his rising once more from the dust, were it only to see him again fall and expire. The Carrousel was filled with a sea of men, which, as it roared and heaved to and fro, gave vent to opposite clamours of "Vive le Roi!" and "Vive l'Empereur!" In the morning the cries of reprobation against the Emperor were nevertheless the most numerous; but as the day declined, the cries of "Vive l'Empereur!" increased with the general impatience—that ruling passion of the multitude; while those who had been the most indifferent, or the most hostile, some hours before, now began to call on the great actor to appear on the stage which had remained too long empty, and conclude the drama which had been too long delayed. Such are the people. The closed gates could scarcely resist the pressure of these 20,000 happy souls.

XVII.

The multitudinous column of soldiers, officers on half-pay, and lower orders of the people, under the command of Excelmans, now passed through the wickets of the Carrousel, and breaking through the crowd with shouts of "Vive l'Empereur!" "A bas les Bourbons!" decided the wavering multitude, who, influenced by the force of numbers, by agitation and by terror, broke out into loud cheers. The column of Excelmans, preceded by a few mounted cuirassiers, who had been enticed away at St. Denis, and dragging after it two pieces of artillery, then advanced towards the gate to demand that the doors should be opened, and to take possession of the palace in which it desired to inaugurate its Emperor. The National Guard at first refused to deliver it up to any but himself,

but Excelmans, having come forward, and entered into a parley with the chiefs of the civic guard, they deemed it more prudent to give up the palace to a Bonapartist general, who, though at the head of a seditious mob, was firm in character, and respected by his accomplices, than to meet the onslaught of the indigent, turbulent, and irresponsible multitudes who covered the place. Of all forms of sedition that of military sedition appears to be the least dangerous to the home of the citizen, because in it a certain sense of order seems to temper the disorder, and a remnant of discipline to provide chiefs even to indiscipline itself. Excelmans entered with his cavalry, his cannon, and his battalion of officers without troops, re-closed the gates, took possession of the doors of the palace, and caused an immense tri-coloured flag to be displayed on the summit of the central pavilion of the Tuileries, as a sign of the residence of the chief, and of the army who had carried it throughout Europe. The National Guard, now left without any motive for remaining assembled around a residence which had been conquered by sedition, gradually dispersed, some still displaying their white cockades, others assuming those of the army, but the majority wearing none at all, and retired to their saddened hearths to await the decision of the night on the fate of their country.

The multitude, worn out and disappointed, after so many hours of expectation, dispersed without disturbance or violence to their dwellings. There then remained on the Carrousel and on the quay, only a few scattered groups, composed of the most fanatic or most devoted adherents of the Emperor, to play the part of the absent people in the scene which the Bonapartist conspirators had prepared for the purpose of publishing it on the morrow to France and to Europe.

XVIII

Darkness had in the meanwhile long descended over Paris, and the Emperor had by turns slackened and hastened his speed, with the view of not arriving before nightfall, but still of reaching his destination on the 20th of March, the anniver-

sary of the birth of his son. Without other religious belief; except that system of politics which plays upon the credulity of nations, he nevertheless entertained that vague superstition of fate which he called his star, and of which he celebrated the worship by the observance of a coincidence of dates, called anniversaries. Mystery and infinity are appreciated and adored by even the most rebellious minds, and the man who will not believe in God, believes in destiny.

Napoleon, after passing his grenadiers of the island of Elba, whom he ordered to halt at Essonne, for the reason we have already mentioned, continued his journey towards Paris. He was escorted by a few officers and mounted soldiers of the different cavalry regiments that he passed on his way, and a hundred of those Poles of the island of Elba whose devoted worship of himself constituted them genuine Mamelukes of the north, and whose uniforms, features, voices, and gestures, inspired all on the road with the warlike, and, at the same time, servile feelings of enthusiasm which they entertained for him. Those of his generals and familiars who felt most anxious to restore a master under whom they might again become the rulers of the empire, had gone to meet him on horseback, and surrounded his travelling carriage, in which they now and then caught glimpses of his pale and feverish countenance, as he sat in the glare of the torches which the cavaliers brandished before his horses' heads. He thus entered Paris, as if it had been a place of bivouac after a hard day's fighting. A profound silence and gloomy solitude reigned throughout the streets, the new Boulevards, and the quays which he traversed on his way to the bridge of Louis XVI., the avenue to his palace. On reaching the end of the bridge on the quay of the Tuileries, the few groups of people who had been stationed there, and who had awaited him since daylight, welcomed his carriage with a few shouts that died away unechoed on the banks of the river, and the carriage dashing at the full gallop of the horses, beneath the arched gallery of the Louvre which leads from the quay to the courtyard, drew up at the foot of the staircase of the Pavilion of Flora.

XIX.

Here he found himself on a sudden in the midst of his own people, the people of his camp and of his court, and the three or four hundred military men of all branches of the army, and all grades of rank. Generals, commissioned and non-commissioned officers, and soldiers, who were spread through the courts, and breathless with impatience, no sooner heard the rolling of his carriage than they flew to the horses' heads, threw themselves on the doors, and under the wheels, like the worshippers of India beneath the car of their idol. Opening the doors with all the violence of fanaticism, they raised the Emperor in their arms, and uttering enthusiastic and phrenzied cries, carried him by the light of the torches up the steps, from landing-place to landing-place; through the halls, and saloons, as far as the cabinet and the bedroom of Louis XVIII., where everything gave evidence of the hurry of a nocturnal departure, and where the tears of that King, and of his followers, which had fallen on his farewell proclamation, had not yet had time to dry. In the midst of this intoxication, entirely concentrated amongst a small number of friends interested in his triumph and connected with his household, Napoleon and his companions of the Isle of Elba could not shake off an impression of sorrow and disappointment on beholding the silence and solitude of the capital. Was it worth the trouble of having crossed the sea, penetrated through France, hurried his march, urged an army to revolt, and braved all Europe, to be received by the coldness and terror of the people, by solitude and by night?

XX.

He did not cease, however, to fortify himself and his courtiers and accomplices against this impression. He repeated a thousand times, and made use of, over and over, with an affected confidence to all those who came to congratulate him, the same words, a symptom of the disquietude of his soul,

which he evidently wished to impress as watchwords upon every lip. "It was not you, it was not your plots, it was not your attachments, which have brought me here; it was the disinterested men, the sub-lieutenants and the soldiers, who have done all; 'tis to the people, 'tis to the army, that I owe everything!" It was felt that the fact of his invasion weighed upon his policy; and that from the first moment, at the risk even of discontenting the accomplices of his return, he wished to attribute it to the people. But if the people did not protest by civic opposition, they protested very generally by their sorrow and their estrangement. History never recorded more audacity in the usurpation of a throne, or a more cowardly submission of a nation to an army. France lost on that day somewhat of its character, the law of its majesty, the liberty of its respect. Military despotism was substituted for public opinion. The pretorians made a mockery of the people. The Lower Empire of Rome enacted in Gaul one of those scenes which degrade history, and humiliate human nature. The only excuse for such an event is that the people were depressed under ten years of military government, that the army was rendered fanatic by ten years of prodigies, and that its idol was a hero. But this hero himself was not long in expiating his attempt against the nation which he had just pounced upon, by finding in his own palace the dishonourable necessity of compounding with his accomplices, the unreasonableness of the opinions which he must purchase by hourly sacrifices, the forced division of power with his secret enemies, the cupidity, the manœuvres, the intrigues, and the treasons of the palace of the Cæsars. He wished to reign at any sacrifice, and he was now destined to impose a reign no longer, but to beg it; to purchase every adhesion by shameful concessions; to tremble before those whom he formerly made tremble with a gesture; to be the slave of those whom he had returned to enslave; to submit to the murmurs, the contradictions, the caprices, and the insolences of the political bodies; to take refuge in camps where he could find victory no more; to fly from a court in which he no longer found safety. The first night that he passed without sleep at the Tuileries began the vengeance of his triumph, and the expiation of his happiness

XXI.

It was necessary for him to give a character to his government. The right of conquest could no longer suffice for France, which had tasted the sweets of liberty. An avowed and brutal dictatorship would have caused a unanimous insurrection; but without the dictatorship how was he to crush the internal parties, and show a front to Europe, now more coalesced than ever against him? He had deceived France by insinuations and falsehoods, wittingly spread up to that moment of the pretended concert which existed, he said, between him and Austria, and the feigned correspondence which he affected to maintain with the Empress Marie-Louise, at Vienna. This artifice, more worthy of a comedian than a hero, might very well have lulled some coarse-minded soldiers and some ignorant peasants on his route, but the enlightened opinion of Paris could see through these stratagems with a single glance. The illusion which had been imposed upon the people, was about to be dissipated with the exposure of the falsehood; and people would not be long in seeing that the only benefit conferred upon the country by these men, formerly so much desired, but now so fatal, would be the necessity of a general levy of all the military population of France, and the raising of an unlimited tax for the payment of an unlimited army. To obtain such sacrifices from the country it was indispensably necessary to offer it some of those great compensations which outweigh, if not for the present, at least in the future, the gold and the blood of nations. It was necessary to evoke the revolution, which he had insulted, driven back, and proscribed; and to offer it, under the pressure of necessity, a base repentance and imprudent concessions with which it would never be satisfied, and never be sure of, in seeing them fall from the hand of its most implacable enemy. In order that this repentance and these concessions might, for the moment at least, be accepted by the revolution, it was necessary to give it pledges. These pledges were the men whose names had remained most in sympathy with the revolutionary spirit—that is to say, the old

republicans. Now, to put the government of despotism into the hands of the republicans, was to place himself at the mercy of the revolution. After having made use of the Emperor to conquer and repulse Europe, these men would avail themselves of the representative institutions of the people to tie down or annihilate the Emperor. On the other side, the republicans, even when called into the councils of the Emperor, could not confide in the master they were going to second; for, after having made use of them to call the people to arms, victory would give to the fortunate chief of the armies an ascendant at Paris which a constitution could not counterbalance, and he would inevitably crush, on his triumphal return from the frontier, the men and things which he had now found it necessary to conciliate for a few days. The whole situation of the Emperor on his arrival at Paris, and of the republicans whom he was going to invite to his alliance, reduced itself, therefore, to a double game of observation, of intrigue, of cunning, and of internal treason, in the very bosom even of the government and of the palace; the Emperor playing off the republicans to borrow from them the revolutionary popularity, and to get rid of them when he should have conquered; the republicans playing off the Emperor, to borrow from him the military popularity, and to get rid of it after it should have disembarrassed them of the Bourbons and of the coalition. The Italian genius of Napoleon, and the Machiavelian genius of Fouché, represented this double situation front to front. What government could spring from this conflict of two opposing stratagems? A weak and equivocal government, the fruit of a double treason. The Emperor felt it from the first moment, and sank down, before he began to act, beneath the weight of the false situation which he was come to brave so rashly for his character and for his dignity. He lamented secretly with his ancient and most confidential councillors, he took advice from everybody, he wavered between dictatorship and concessions, the one alienating from him the people, the others alienating him from himself. He finished by confiding to time, and to that star which is only the action of a high

intellect upon his destiny, and which could no longer shine in such a cloudy atmosphere. He resigned himself to bend before all the world, until he could raise himself by victory and bend all the world before him. His nature, although imperious in success, was pliant in adversity. He knew how to yield at proper times, and to assume every hue of opinion, as he had done at the commencement of his career, at Toulon under Robespierre, and at Paris under Barras; to feign death on occasion, like those vanquished animals which, no longer able to defend themselves by struggling, do it by their immobility, and preserve themselves from the attacks of their enemies by giving themselves up as motionless bodies to their pity or their contempt.

XXII.

Before daybreak appeared he summoned Cambacères. this vice-emperor whom he always left at Paris during his absence, to personify the wisdom and represent the etiquette of the Empire. He was astonished that he had not seen him before, and he drew a bad omen from a tardiness which seemed to him in so prudent a man an evil presage of destiny. Cambacères, of an erudite mind, well regulated, extensive and profound, sagacious even to timidity, was everywhere the first in the category of second parts: force of character alone was wanting to enable him to fill the first He was one of those men who always take shelter behind men greater than themselves; seeking for superiority in those with whom they ally themselves, with as much care as other men take to shun equality in a colleague. Thrown into the first revolution by his merit as a jurisconsult, more than by his nature, which was strongly imbued with traditions, he had escaped by silence and keeping in the background, the great implications of the Reign of Terror. His equivocal or contradicted vote on the trial of Louis XVI. did not render him either entirely innocent, or absolutely guilty of the crime of regicide, in the eyes of the Bourbons. The general amnesty sheltered him under their reign, to which he accommodated himself for his security,

his leisure, and his riches. He had not conspired for the return of the Emperor; and no one, perhaps, amongst the former dignitaries of the Empire had seen with greater alarm than he did, the landing at Cannes, which was to bring him unwillingly upon the scene again, and constrain him to pronounce for or against his ancient colleague in the consulate. He was too well versed in affairs, and had too much experience in government, to entertain any illusions on the eventual fate of this tragic adventure. He knew that miracles are never repeated; that France of 1814, exhausted, weary, and discontented, would not long bear the weight of a second empire; that the sword of despotism is never mended after being once broken, and that coalesced Europe defied in the moment of victory, would not fall back from Paris to Berlin, to Vienna, to Moscow, and to Madrid, before the escaped prisoner of Elba. The great Empire was to the clear-sighted optics of Cambacères, a drama played out, of which the second empire could only be a short and tragical parody; attempted through impatience, and brought to a close by a national insurrection in Paris, or by a defeat on a field of battle. He did not wish at any price to take an active part in a government condemned beforehand by his own sound sense; but, in spite of his horror of accepting, he had not the courage to refuse; his past career and his timidity chained him to the Emperor in spite of himself.

XXIII.

Cambacères suited Napoleon better than any other, to impart to the commencement of his government that indeterminate character, half revolutionary, half despotic, under which he felt it convenient to mask his real designs. Cambacères, by his conventional origin, did not clash with the wrecks of the convention which necessity was throwing into the ministry, whilst by his proverbial obsequiousness to the Emperor he did not clash with the Napoleonists. The Emperor unbosomed himself to him with the fullest confidence, and did not dissemble to him any of the mysteries or the embarrassments of his mind. Cambacères frankly told him that the enterprise

of restoring the military government a few months after the loss of the continent, and the invasion of France by the allied army, appeared to him an attempt beyond human genius; that the Bourbons, without doubt, were ignorant of France, and that they had resided rather than reigned at the Tuileries; but that the numerous hopes of liberty and peace which their return had excited in a worn-out country, exceeded by a great deal the mass of discontent to which they had given birth; that France had respired once more the breath of liberty and would be uneasy, importunate, suspicious, and difficult to reassure; that parties, instead of being enervated, as in the days of the consulate, were regenerated, ardent, and incited by the press and by the orators; that he would no longer find the Senate or the people of 1814; that his marshals themselves, so loaded with favours by the Bourbons, and so weary of war, would no longer offer to him the same docility and the same ardour as formerly; that the prestige of his power had been dissipated in the eyes of many of them at Fontainebleau; that they would bargain for their services; that the army, by the insurrection it had raised against its officers, must have fallen off in its obedience and its discipline, that the finances, which had been squandered at the conclusion of the last reign, and the commencement of that of the Bourbons, and in indemnities to the foreign powers for the ransom of the country, would not bear any more in the way of taxation or credit, but what was done by rashness or violence; that the power being contended for between the republicans and the imperialists, would be without unity, and without concert, and would introduce faction even to the bosom of the council, charged with restraining at the same time so many other factions; that everything had grown old in a few months, and above all, he himself, and that he conjured the Emperor, therefore, to leave him in the obscurity wherein he wished to shelter the remnant of his life.

XXIV.

But Napoleon repelled all these pretexts and refuted all these grounds of terror, without, however, denying his diffi-

culties, which he seemed certain of surmounting, provided they would only give him time. "One successful action," he said to Cambacères, "would regain in a day all that has been lost in a year of adversity and absence. The first cannon shot will clear the atmosphere. Moreover, I am no longer the same man. I have thought much since I have been in the school of adversity and solitude. The indifference evinced by France at my fall, has taught me that this country had, or thought it had, requirements which my government could not satisfy; but I can accommodate myself to those constitutional tendencies which manifest themselves in the world since Europe has become weary of war. I am weary myself, I am growing old, I have nothing to add to my name in military glory; I can make my dynasty take root in the manners and ideas of the time by also giving a charter, and more than a charter, a code of new ideas, of which my son will be the powerful guardian after me. I have this advantage over the Bourbons, that I am not bound by the past, or compromised in its ruins. Why should I not be the Charlemagne of what you call the liberal ideas? My genius is equal to all!"

He forgot that a genius which has been devoted to despotism, and has opposed itself to the spirit of his age, is no longer fit for anything but to restore slavery or to betray freedom.

XXV

Cambacères allowed himself, not to be convinced, but to yield, and he submitted to a favour which he did not dare to refuse. He was appointed Minister of Justice, and resumed the title of Arch-chancellor of the Empire, Gaudin had the Finances, Mollien the Treasury, Decrès the Marine, and Davoust the War-office. The Emperor did not much like this marshal, born before him to fame, and preserving the pride of his birth which he mingled with the roughness of the camp, but little flexible under the hand of a master, independent, blunt, with a republican accent, but active, with a commanding name, and necessary to the army at a crisis

which the return of Napoleon was preparing. Napoleon also conquered his repugnance, in placing at the head of the Home Department, one of those men who since the 18th Brumaire, had formed the most striking contrast to the general servitude; this was Carnot. Whether he was tired of the idleness in which his military talents were languishing, or whether the dangers of the country prevailed with him over his dislike to the usurper of the revolution, and the restorer of thrones, Carnot, a republican under the convention, even to the self-denial of his fame in the proscriptions of the Committee of Public Safety; Carnot subsequently proscribed himself as a royalist, but always a republican, and protesting against the consulate and against the Empire, when everybody else was bending under the sway of Napoleon; Carnot had returned to the service, and defended the bulwark of Antwerp in the last campaign of 1814. He had, though a regicide, hailed the return of the Bourbons, on condition that their return would restore the popular ideas of 1789. He afterwards braved the victorious emigration by letters to the King, wherein he mingled severity of counsel with respect for Louis XVIII. These letters had surrounded Carnot with an immense popularity amongst the republican and liberal parties.

The Emperor felt the strength which the adhesion of such a man would lend to his cause; he accordingly sent for Carnot, and appealed to his patriotism by the excess even of the perils which the country would have to encounter, both abroad and at home. "You are the man of necessity," he said to him. "I am cured of despotism, I am conquered by reason, although a conqueror by arms. The revolution, of which you and I are the children, requires my name to defend it abroad, as I have occasion for yours to reconcile it to me at home. Let us both make a generous sacrifice; I of my system of government, too absolute and too personal for the new requirements of the time, and you of your distrust of me. Let us unite. Be you the link that binds me to public opinion; let us triumph together over royalty within, and against the coalition abroad. I offer you as a pledge, the ministry of the Interior, and as a

recompense, victory at the frontiers, and a liberal constitution, to be founded under my dynasty, the only one acceptable to your friends."

Carnot had the weakness of his souvenirs, and the illusion of his hopes. He forgot that a statesman owes to his country all the sacrifices of ambition, but never the sacrifice of his opinions and of his constancy; because the power of a statesman is in his opinions and not in himself. He accepted the appointment: he did more, he gave in his turn as a pledge to the Emperor somewhat of his dignity of character, by accepting at the same time one of the ridiculous feudal titles which Napoleon had thrown out as a bait to the vanity of his courtiers and his soldiers. Carnot, as a count of the Empire, clashed with the austere republican of the convention, effacing the titles of the ancient nobility by the puritanical laws of equality, cemented by the blood of the guillotine. Doubtless he thought he owed this puerility as a guarantee to the Napoleon party, which distrusted Carnot until he had been linked to its dynasty by a counter-revolutionary favour. But every free man who enters the palace of a despot to compound with his principles, comes out of it weakened by all that he has received. Carnot, travestied rather than decorated by this title, had lost, on assuming the ministry of the Interior, the independence which won him his popularity, and the austerity which constituted his strength. He had given the example of the suppleness of the courtier to those whom he wished to inspire with the manly patriotism of the republican. From thenceforward he was won over to the dynastic interest of him that he had wished to win over to liberty.

XXVI.

Caulaincourt, condemned by his name and by the wishes of his heart to fidelity to Napoleon, whose last negociator he was at Fontainebleau, although he foresaw, with grief, the inutility of his services, resumed under him the impossible part of negociator between Europe and the Empire: he received the ministry of Foreign Affairs

Maret resumed the post of Secretary of State, universal and personal minister of Napoleon; the active, indefatigable, and mechanical hand of that head which did all. Maret, too close and too trusty to inspire great counsels, was more an instrument than a thought. Men of this description are useful to absolute power, which does not wish to be enlightened but served. The Emperor, on finding Maret again, regretted the loss of Berthier, his Maret of the camp. "Where is he? where is he?" he frequently repeated to his intimates. "Why does he distrust me? I will pardon his precipitation in quitting me, and his pliancy to the Bourbons. They were the gods of his youth; he has always been a royalist. I will receive him with open arms, and will give him back his place of chief of the staff in my tent. I shall inflict no other punishment upon him than to make him dine with us in his new uniform of captain of the guards of Louis XVIII." But Berthier, at once faithful in heart to his old general, and in honour to the Bourbons, had fled into Germany to escape the Emperor's fascination over him. There, struggling between his inclination and his duty, Berthier was destined in his enigmatical death, a refuge against his perplexity. A brave and able man in the field, undecided in council, honest on all occasions, and who had passed through the revolution and the Empire, without having tarnished his name by anything worse than the noble failings of friendship and of love.

XXVII

Monsieur Molé, a young patrician, eager for employment under both reigns, who gave pledges to the aristocracy by his name, to Bonaparte by his doctrines, and to all by his impatience to serve a government, resigned to Cambacères the ministry of Justice, which he had occupied before the fall of the Empire, and resumed the direction of roads and public works, a pretext for an adhesion which he did not over estimate. Réal, who had been initiated in the mysteries and audacity of the imperial police since the consulate, received a ministry of a personal check-police, under the title of Prefect of the

Paris Police. The ministry of the general police of the Empire was with regret entrusted to Fouché.

XXVIII.

Fouché was one of the necessities of Bonaparte on his return. This man had had the art of placing and maintaining himself in such an ambiguous position, in the eyes of the Bonapartists, of the republicans, and of the partisans of the Bourbons, that to the first he answered for the concurrence of the revolution, to the second for their safety, to the third for their hopes, and to all for their most private interest; being at once the master and negociator between these several parties. Bonaparte dreaded him, suspected him, hated him, but thought him necessary. He was one of those instruments that serve but hang heavy on the hand that makes use of them, and destroy them when it wishes to dispense with them. Bonaparte had already made use of his services twice since the consulate as Minister of Police; and Fouché had been his official corrupter of republican opinions, which he wished to rally to his power. Twice, thinking himself strong enough to dispense with such a minister, he had dismissed him with anger, but loaded with honours, and without daring to make an irreconcilable enemy of him by an open disgrace; and twice he had taken him back in spite of himself, as if constrained by difficult circumstances to have recourse to his sovereign ability. The most critical event of his life now rendered him for the last time necessary; and he resolved to suffer him again until the moment when he could entirely crush him.

Fouché, on his side, knew and hated Napoleon; but incapable of submitting to the idle obscurity of a private life, and eager to take a share in the affairs of the political world, he hastened to plunge into the new drama which chance opened to his view, either to contribute to its success if he found in it power and fortune, or to complicate it if it lent itself to intrigue, his principal passion, or else to wind up the plot at the critical moment when he should see the great actor half vanquished, and to exhibit himself before France, and before

Europe, as the arbiter of events. This part was admirably suited to his nature; life to him had never been anything but a great game of opinions; risen with the revolution, he had played off, even to the shedding of blood, the fanaticism of the Jacobin; and his name and his character had preserved its tragic colouring. The proconsul was recollected under the garb of the courtier; but even in this part of revolutionary proconsul, preceded by the axe of the Reign of Terror, he had more affected the fury of the time than been gratified by it. In the performance of his part, he had exhibited more of fear than of crime; and whether from natural humanity, or a clever presentiment of the reaction which always follows proscriptions, he had threatened much but struck little; he had even made friends for himself amongst his victims. When the fury of the revolution had abated, he hastened to wash the spots from his hands, to repudiate terrorism, to anathematize anarchy, to declare himself the partisan of unity and strength in the government, and to serve the counter-revolutionary power with the zeal of a convert who wishes to obtain his pardon, and with the impudence of a revolutionist who has himself lost the memory of his past life. This zeal and this impudence had raised his fortune as high as subaltern ambition can ascend under a despotism; but he dreamt of raising it still higher, and even to unknown dictatorships, when despotism, overturned a second time, should make room for all the chances of ambition. But power and fortune were even still less his object than intrigue and inactivity. It might be believed that this man was pursued by the remorse of his early years, and that perpetual movement and the complications of intrigue were necessary for him to blunt the memory of the past. Nature, solitude, and reflection had given him a real superiority over all his rivals in ambition, except M. de Talleyrand. Like him, he had quitted the church in which Fouché had commenced by the cloister, that school of egotism and dissimulation to those who do not take into it a holy disposition and an ascetic mind. Great ambition and high court abilities are generally formed and nurtured in these monkish souls, isolated from their families and sequestered from the world, in modern

times, as that ambition and that ability were formed and nurtured in antiquity amongst the eunuchs of the palaces of Rome and Byzantium. Those men burn with the passions of the mind, who cannot indulge the passions of the heart. Such was Fouché. He had seen the Count d'Artois and M. de Blacas, as we have related, a few days before the retirement of the Bourbons, and he had exchanged watchwords with the minister and the friends of Louis XVIII. "You save the King!" he said to them in separating, "I take upon myself to save the monarchy."

XXIX.

Napoleon had scarcely arrived at the Tuileries when Fouché, issuing from the retreat where he had concealed himself from the feigned pursuit of the Bourbons, and from the pretended order of arrest which they had issued against him, hastened into the presence of his old master, and devoted himself in appearance to his cause and person. "I am indebted to you for my dignity, my fortune, and my titles," he exclaimed, affecting the joy of a man who had escaped from extreme peril, and whose gratitude assured his fidelity; "but now I owe you my liberty and perhaps my life. It is I who gave the signal to the troops in the north, who directed them to march upon Paris, to intimidate the Bourbons by a double insurrection against their cause, to force them to retire from Paris, and to leave you the capital, the centre of everything in France. It is I who, afterwards learning that this movement, though concerted by others, was about to result in proclaiming the Duke d'Orleans, rendered this enterprise abortive; that this new candidate for the throne should not come to complicate your difficulties and to retard your advance upon Paris."

The Emperor himself, eager to conceal all distrust under the good nature and boundless confidence of a happy man, did not evince any difficulty in receiving these proofs of the devotion of Fouché; his apparent credulity responded to the stratagem of his old minister. He congratulated himself on finding again, in one of the greatest crises of his life, a servant

so well versed in affairs, so well acquainted with men, and so capable of bringing over the republicans to his side, which was his only hope. He conferred upon Fouché the ministry of the general police of the kingdom, the sole political ministry of this reign, which was only to be, until victory should declare itself, a cunning negociation with public opinion. He thought himself master of Fouché and of his party by this unreserved confidence, which was giving such a pledge to the revolution; but Fouché, in his turn, felt himself master of the Emperor, by a ministry which would give him the secrets of all parties and the domination of the council.

XXX.

It was necessary immediately to strike public opinion, still in a state of indecision, by a great act of adhesion of the principal political characters, whom the dissolution of the Chambers had not sent away from Paris, and to give its official significance to the new reign by a brilliant programme of the government. The councillors of state of the Empire, for the most part the day before councillors of state of the Restoration, men of talent, of fame, of special and administrative merit; but men whose characters had been hackned, for the last twenty years, in all the vicissitudes of events, and in all the versatilities of devotion, were convoked by the Emperor. They drew up a hurried address, in which the monarchy and the republic struggled together in an ambiguity of terms, which left every thing to be hoped for, but defined nothing. They all signed this address which put between them and the Bourbons the abyss of the authentic recognition of the rights of Napoleon. The rights of the nation, although feebly expressed in this address, were repugnant to some amongst them. They abstained from signing doctrines which they foresaw must, at a later period, displease Napoleon, and reserved themselves entirely for the personal and absolute sovereignty of the master; more able flatterers than their colleagues, they dared to resist the official desires of their master, the better to conciliate his private wishes. M. Molé was of this number. He had, when

young, written the "Theory of Absolute Power," and he would not forswear his faith when in authority. The Emperor could not be angry with those who, longing for government since the revolution, adored in a single individual that social power which they did not wish to be at the trouble of looking for in a whole people.

"Sire," said M. de Fermou, the orator of the council of state, a man accustomed to mould his harangues to the ceremonies of the palace, "the Emperor, in re-ascending the throne to which he had been raised by the people, re-establishes thereby the people in their most sacred rights. He only recalls to put them in execution the decrees of the representative assemblies, sanctioned by the nation. He returns to reign by the only principle of legitimacy which France has recognised and consecrated for twenty-five years past, and to which all the authorities were bound by oaths from which the will of the people alone could absolve them.

"The Emperor is called upon to guarantee anew by institutions (and he has engaged himself to do so in his proclamations to the people and the army) all the liberal principles, individual liberty, and equality of rights; the liberty of the press, and the abolition of the censorship, the freedom of religious worship, the voting of the contributions and the laws by the representatives of the nation, legally elected, the national property arising from every source, the independence and irremovability of the legal tribunals, and the responsibility of the ministers, and of all the agents of government.

"The better to consecrate the rights and the obligations of the people and of the monarch, the national institutions are to be revised in a grand assembly of the representatives, already announced by the Emperor.

"Until the meeting of this grand representative assembly, the Emperor is to exercise, and cause to be exercised, conformably to the existing laws and constitution, the power which they have delegated to him, which cannot be taken from him, which he cannot resign without the assent of the nation, and which the wishes and general interest of the French people make it his duty to resume."

"Princes are the first citizens of the state," responded the Emperor; "their authority is more or less extended, according to the interest of the nations they govern. Sovereignty itself is only hereditary because the interest of nations requires it. Beyond this principle I know of no legitimacy.

"I have renounced all ideas of the great Empire, of which for fifteen years I had only been laying the foundations; henceforward the happiness and consolidation of the French Empire shall be the object of all my thoughts."

XXXI.

But of all the instabilities, and of all the prostrations of character which signalised the day after the entrance of Napoleon into Paris, the most memorable and the most mysterious by the excess even of the inconstancy and of the scandal, was that of a man, since celebrated, whom the spirit of party, which pardons all, pardoned even for this contradiction of himself. This man was Benjamin Constant. We have quoted the indignant and almost Roman protest, which he published on the eve of the Emperor's arrival against this military invasion which was to sink France into the slavery of the Lower Empire, and which condemned all good citizens to voluntary exile, or to the suicide of Cato. Benjamin Constant, after words like these, was the last man whom it was permitted to sell, or give himself to victorious despotism, at least without himself devoting human speech to the derision of all who have any respect for the words of man.

Benjamin Constant, however, did not quit Paris on the 20th of March, whether it was that he himself did not look upon his protest in a serious point of view, as one who casts his words upon the wind without believing them, or that he had the momentary intention of braving the tyranny which he had provoked, or because he was sure before-hand of meriting more pardon, and of purchasing more favour by the value which his resplendent opposition would give to his conversion. Others say that a foolish love for a lady celebrated for her charms and irreproachable in her conduct, Madame Récamier, made

exile impossible to him. Others think that, attached for a long time to Madame de Staël, whose opposition to Napoleon had been subdued by this triumph, and who had some millions to claim from the State, and some favours to solicit in the palace, he was drawn over by these motives which had weight with the fickle mind and easy conscience of Benjamin Constant. Finally, others said that the vanity of being looked upon as a man who was worth the trouble of being conquered, and whose conquest decided that of a party, was the secret, no one, however, knew the motives, though all were acquainted with the act

XXXII.

Benjamin Constant, after some resistance, repaired to the palace. The Emperor, who had read his imprecation, wished to give, in his interview with this writer, and in a favour lavished upon an enemy, a striking example of amnesty to free opinions formerly persecuted. He received Benjamin Constant as Augustus did Cinna. He chased away from his features and from his lips all the disdain and all the hatred which he bore to Madame de Stael, to her friend, and to that liberalism, half republican, half constitutional, the worst obstacle to his reconciliation with France. He pretended to open his heart, without leaving a shadow there, to Benjamin Constant, and entreated him to accept the functions of a councillor of state.

"The nation," he said, "has reposed for twelve years from all political agitation, and for a year it has reposed from war. This double repose makes it in want of activity; it wants, or thinks it wants, parliamentary discussion and legislative chambers; but it has not always wished for them. It threw itself at my feet when I assumed the government: you ought to recollect it, you who attempted an opposition. Where was your support, your strength? No where. I assumed less authority than I was invited to take. Now everything is changed. A weak government, opposed to the interests of the nation, has given to these interests the habit of putting themselves on their defence, and of cavilling with authority. The taste for constitutions, for debates, and for harangues, appears to have returned

Nevertheless, it is only the minority that wishes for them; do not deceive yourself in the matter. The people, or if you like it better, the multitude, crowding on my footsteps, hurrying from the summits of the mountains, called upon me, sought me out, saluted me! From Cannes to Paris I have not conquered, I have administered the government. I am not only, as it is said, the Emperor of the soldiers, I am the Emperor of the peasants, of the plebeians of France. Therefore, in spite of all that has past, you see the people come back to me. There is a sympathy between us. It is not so with the privileged classes The nobility have served me; they rushed in crowds into my antechambers. There is not a post that they have not accepted, asked for, solicited. I have had the Montmorencies, the Noailles, the Rohans, the Beauvaus, the Mortemarts; but there has never been any sympathy. The horse curvetted, he was well trained, but I felt him quiver. It is different with the people. The popular fibre responds to my own: I am sprung from the ranks of the people; my voice acts upon them. Look at those conscripts, those sons of peasants. I did not flatter them, I treated them rudely; they did not surround me the less for it, they did not the less cry out "Vive l'Empereur!" That is because there is the same nature between us. They look upon me as their support, as their saviour against the nobles. I have only to make a sign, or simply to avert my eyes, and the nobles would be massacred in all the provinces. They have managed so well in eighteen months! But I don't wish to be the king of a *Jacquerie*. If there are any means of governing with a constitution well and good! I wished to have the empire of the world, and to obtain it an unlimited power was necessary. To govern France alone, perhaps a constitution would be better. I wished for the empire of the world, and who would not have wished for it in my place? The world invited me to govern it: sovereigns and subjects alike threw themselves under my sceptre. I have rarely met with resistance in France; but I have met with more from a few obscure and disarmed Frenchmen, than from all those kings so proud to-day at not having a man of the people for their equal. Consider, then, what seems possible to you; bring me your ideas.

Public discussions, free elections, responsible ministers, the liberty of the press—I wish for all that—the liberty of the press above all; 'tis absurd to stifle it—I am convinced on this point—I am the man of the people; if the people wish for liberty, I owe it to them. I have acknowledged their sovereignty; I must lend an ear to their wishes, even to their caprices. I have never wished to oppress them for my own pleasure. I had great designs, but fate has decided them. I am no longer a conqueror: I can no longer be one. I know what is possible and what is not. I have now only one mission: to raise up France again, and to give it the most suitable form of government. I do not hate liberty; I set it aside when it obstructed my path, but I understand it; I have been brought up in its principles. Thus, therefore, the work of fifteen years is destroyed, it cannot be begun again It would require twenty years, and a sacrifice of two millions of men. Moreover, I wish for peace, and I shall not obtain it but by dint of victories; I do not wish to give you false hopes; I give up saying that there are negociations: there are none. I foresee a difficult struggle—a long war. To maintain it, the nation must support me; but in recompense, the nation, as I firmly believe, will require its liberty. It shall have it. The situation is new. I desire nothing better than to be enlightened. I am growing old. We are no longer at forty-five what we were at thirty. The repose of a constitutional king may suit me: it will certainly suit my son still better."

XXXIII.

Thus bound up in the cause of Napoleon was found one of those men who had promised Europe the firmest resistance to a second tyranny. Benjamin Constant, of a genius too penetrating to be subject to the simplicity of confidence, affected to believe that he might have a pretext for his defection of character. But he could not lead an individual of his party into this credulity; and he had recourse to those reservations and windings by which deserters injure at the same time the cause they have embraced and that which they have betrayed. Useless

to both, hurtful to himself, he only brought to Napoleon a name discredited by his inconsistency, embarrassment into his councils, and very soon after compromises with the opposite party. Madame de Staël had only some transactions, unexpected on her part, with the Emperor, for the fortune of her children. She negociated, but at least she held her tongue, and appeared undecided, like destiny, between repulsion for so much audacity, and admiration for so much good fortune.

XXXIV.

In the meanwhile, Napoleon, delighted at having alienated this equivocal tribune from the liberal cause, completed the organization of his government, giving his enemies certain trifling pledges, but reserving to himself the principal appointments of war and of the police, which secured to him in the important parts of the Empire the old feeling and personal fidelity of his courtiers. M. de Montalivet, for a long time minister of the interior, descended to the administration of the civil list. M. de Champagny, formerly minister of foreign affairs, was appointed to the direction of the naval stores. Savary took, in the command of the gendarmerie, a second police of inquisition and of execution, of a more military and private character than that of Fouché, and the liberty of the citizens was again at the mercy of a sudden mandate of the Emperor. He then recomposed his personal staff of the same generals and aides-de-camp of whom it consisted a year before, Lauriston alone having the decency to refuse a proof of confidence, which the favours of the Bourbons would not allow him to accept, and the Emperor supplied his place with Labédoyère, whose defection he wished to place in the light of a glorious action, but did not succeed in deceiving public opinion, or even the conscience of Labédoyère himself. This young colonel was sensible of his crime against military fidelity, and wished to colour it with patriotism, or at least to honour it by disinterestedness. "The Emperor owes me nothing," he replied to the first promises conveyed to him on the part of him to whom he had delivered up his regiment and his country. "I do not

wish it to be thought that I have joined him merely by the allurement of recompense. I have only embraced his cause for the sake of liberty and the welfare of the country, and if what I have done should be of use to the country, the honour of having served it will be sufficient for me—I want nothing from the Emperor."

But Napoleon wished to do violence to public opinion, by brilliantly rewarding that which it reprobated; the more so, as he feared lest his cause, which he wished to be mingled with that of the country, should become separated from it even in mere words, amongst the young military men. The progress of this contagion of liberty, which in the civil ranks threatened him with no immediate danger, gave him much uneasiness in the ranks of the army, and he tried to nip it in the bud by an excess of favours in the camp and in the court. For three days he pressed his favours on this young man, who, in former times, he would have sent to a military prison, and Labédoyere ended by accepting the reward for having handed over the Empire; but even in the height of favour he continued to display the uneasiness, ill humour, and rudeness of speech of a guilty person, whose success cannot smother the sense of dissatisfaction at his own conduct.

The court of Napoleon was re-peopled with the same facility as his camps The members of that high nobility—deserters from the palace of Louis XVI. to the imperial palace, and from the imperial palace into the household of the Bourbons—now returned to their service in the court of the Emperor. Illustrious races, the ornaments of courts, these families seemed to experience the necessity of servitude as much as monarchs feel the want of their services. But, strange to say, while Napoleon gave them back their employments in his honorary household at the Tuileries, he made a stringent clearance from the palace of all the poor hired servants, who for their livelihood had passed from the service of his imperial house to the service of the royal house of the Bourbons; as if he wished to punish in the servile ranks of the people, those infidelities and apostacies of the heart which he encouraged in the superior ranks of the nation! Did he esteem these courtiers of great

families so little that he rewarded in them those vices which he punished in other ranks? Or rather, was he so much intoxicated himself with his own superiority that he honoured his courtiers for failing towards him alone in every sentiment of honour? "Voluntary slaves," says Tacitus, "make more tyrants than tyrants make slaves."

The better to mislead the opinions of the people on the communications which he affected to maintain with the Empress Marie-Louise, the voluntary captive of her father at Vienna, Napoleon appointed the wives of his principal ministers, or of his most intimate associates, ladies of the palace to the Empress. Madame Maret, Madame Caulaincourt, Madame Savary, and Madame Duchâtel received or resumed their titles in the empty court of the Tuileries. Their names served as a screen to the place where it was pretended that the daughter of the Emperor of Austria and her son were expected every day. Napoleon knew very well that he did not thus deceive any one around him; but, like a consummate actor on the throne, knowing the power of illusion over the people, he did not disdain to play these deceitful parts to prolong in the minds of the multitude the belief of his secret concert with the allied powers, and their consequent hopes of peace.

Bertrand, the faithful companion of his adversities, resumed at the Tuileries the functions of grand marshal of the palace, to which he had done honour at the Isle of Elba. Drouot, one of the two generals who had followed him into exile, was appointed major-general of his guard; Bertrand, more agreeable and more of a courtier; Drouot, more timid and restrained in his devotion to the Emperor; both were worthy by their different merits to be the two Hephistions of this other Alexander.

The grenadiers of the old guard, and the soldiers of the cavalry and of the line, who had reopened France to Napoleon, and who still bivouacked in the courtyard of the palace to which they had brought back their Emperor, appeared to be forgotten by him now, and secretly murmured at this forgetfulness, so like ingratitude. All his consideration, all his attentions, all his favours were for the officers and soldiers, who, by deserting the Bourbons, had delivered the throne and the

country to Napoleon. The troops of the Duke de Berry had followed him into Paris, and loudly demanded at least to salute the Emperor, before whom they had laid down their arms. He assembled them on the Place du Carrousel, mounted his horse and reviewed them leisurely, amidst the frantic cries of the battalions and squadrons, who thought that in him they saluted victory, when they saluted nothing but their own death.

"Soldiers!" he said to them, with the manly energy of the enterprise he had just accomplished—thanks to them; "soldiers! I came into France with 600 men, because I reckoned on the love of the people, and on the memory of the old soldiers. I have not been deceived in my expectation. Soldiers! I thank you for it. The glory of what we have just done is due to the people and to you; mine is limited to having known and appreciated your affection.

"Soldiers! the throne of the Bourbons was illegitimate, because it had been raised by foreign hands, because it had been proscribed by the will of the nation, expressed in all our national assemblies; and finally, because it only offered a guarantee to the interests of a small number of arrogant men, whose pretensions are opposed to our rights.

"Soldiers! the imperial throne can alone guarantee the rights of the people; and, above all, our paramount interest, that of our glory. Soldiers! we are going to march to drive away from our territory those princes who are the auxiliaries of foreigners. The nation will not only second us with its wishes, but will even follow our impulse. The French people and I count upon you: we do not wish to meddle with the affairs of foreign countries, but woe to them who would meddle with us!"

XXXV.

The acclamations of the King's army, and of the multitude present on the occasion, had scarcely died away, when a still more military and pathetic scene broke upon the view of the spectators. A group of officers of all ranks and of all arms, of the army of exile, with General Cambronnè at their head, their features burnished by the sun of Italy, their shoes and hats

tarnished with the dust of the south, detached themselves from the battalion of grenadiers of the Isle of Elba, who were drawn up under the walls of the Louvre, and easily recognised by their uniforms, torn by time and soiled by the road. Their steps were regulated by military music as they advanced to the slow and tragic strains of the *Marseillaise*, re-echoed from afar by the multitude, as if the Emperor wished to secure a good reception for these pretorians of his personal cause by a compliment to the revolution, which he summoned in despair to his assistance. They bore the ancient eagles of the Imperial Guard and of the army, laid by, or found again for this occasion. They defiled with gloomy majesty before the silent army, and formed a square round their Emperor. Napoleon received them with a countenance agitated by grateful feelings; then opening the square on the side of the army, he advanced between the front of the troops and the group of officers of the Isle of Elba. Calling, by a gesture, the attention of the troops drawn up in line, to this little handful of men, his faithful followers and comrades of his exile, he said:

"Soldiers! behold the officers of the battalion which accompanied me in my misfortune; they are all my friends; they are dear to my heart. Every time I saw them they represented to me the different regiments of the army; for amongst these 600 brave soldiers there are men of every regiment. They recalled to my mind those great events, the memory of which is so dear to me, for they are all covered with honourable wounds received at those memorable battles. In loving them it was all of you soldiers of the whole French army that I loved. They bring you back your eagles; let them serve you for a rallying point! In giving them to the guard I give them to the whole army.

"Treason and unhappy circumstances had covered them with a funereal veil; but thanks to the French people and to you, they have reappeared resplendent with all their glory. Swear that they shall be found everywhere, and at all times, that they may be summoned by the interest of the country; that traitors and those who wish to invade our territory may never be able to withstand their avenging glance."

"We swear it!" replied the army, with one voice. "Vive l'Empereur!" was the oath of the group—"Vive l'Empereur!" was the echo of the multitude.

The grenadiers were reviewed in their turn, and being recalled from murmuring to attachment by promises of promotion, employment in the imperial palaces, pensions, gratuities, and special advancement in the army, they were pacified, and shared in the military joy of this great occasion. The Emperor alighted in their arms, and reascended the steps of the great staircase to shut himself up in his cabinet, and prepare himself for war, the only work of this reconquered reign.

XXXVI.

This cabinet of the Tuileries, wherein two opposing governments had succeeded each other four times in so short a period, was an image of this instability and this rapidity of fortunes The King had quitted it so unexpectedly, and with so much haste and trouble, that the walls, the furniture, the tables still preserved the impress of his presence and of his thoughts. There he had sat in one of those large easy chairs, to which his infirmities confined him as much as his conversations, his councils, and his studies. He had brought thither from Hartwell, his country retreat during so many years, a small work-table dear to his habits, as one of those souvenirs of exile which exalt the feeling of present happiness by the memory of adversity. A portfolio, forgotten upon the table by his servants, contained the most private memorials of his heart and his family, his letters from the princes, those of the Duchess d'Angoulême, some of his plans of government, the most secret confidences from men of different parties, who made revelations to him, or who offered him the devotion of their services, some pictures, and some religious books, souvenirs of his wife, or of Louis XVI,, relics of his heart, or official decoration of the apartment of the most Christian King. The abject malignity of some courtiers of the Emperor, eager to flatter the conqueror by the derision of the conquered, had spread out upon the mantelpiece some satirical and insulting prints, which the hatred of the Bonapartist con-

spirators had issued as food for the mob, and in which old age, nature, and misfortune were scoffed at by contemptible artists.

The Emperor had them removed in disgust from his eyes. He was too much elevated by victory not to have at least in his soul the pride of his rank and the dignity of his triumph. He sent away also the objects of piety. "The cabinet of a French monarch," said he, "ought not to resemble the oratory of a monk but the tent of a general." He ordered to be spread upon the tables the maps of his campaigns, and that of France; and regarding sorrowfully the new limits of the kingdom: "Poor France!" he exclaimed, with an accent of bitterness and reproach towards his successors, an accusation against them which rebounded entirely upon himself; for he it was who had received from the republic frontiers more extended than those of 1814, and it was his own sword, which, after having rent the map of so many provinces to add them to his empire, had ended by restricting the country to these narrow proportions upon the globe, and by effacing even the frontiers of France by drawing the invasion to this very palace. But man always throws his faults and his misfortunes upon others, and fancies he can prevent accusation by accusation.

He felt that he owed a sacrifice to necessity, and a compensation to glory, which he no longer brought as formerly to the country at each return he made. He signed a decree which restored to the country the freedom of printing and of journalism. No one was more convinced than himself that this liberty is incompatible with the authority of an absolute government, and that in signing it he signed for a time the abdication of his own power, and of his own security; but he reckoned on the first giddiness of that liberty, which had not yet sufficiently created the habits of publicity to do him any injury. He counted above all on the emotions of threatened patriotism which the war must produce in France, and which would distract people's minds from disputing about the government. Finally, he reckoned on approaching triumphs which would give him back the dictatorship, and enable him to struggle once more, through the medium of the police, against public opinion. Moreover, he had no option; for the men of the revolution, whom he had

been forced to call to his assistance, imperatively claimed this pledge. He gave it to them with repugnance, but from necessity: he had staked his all upon a chance, and it was necessary for a time to accept the conditions. This was the one which pained him most, and which he most contested with his councillors.

XXXVII.

During these first acts and first indecisions of Napoleon between absolute government—the only form which a will so positive and so rebellious against obstacles could comprehend—and constitutional government, which could alone justify his invasion, what was the fugitive King about?

Louis XVIII., preceding his army, and accompanied only by Berthier, M. de Blacas, and some intimates of his civil and military households, had taken the route to Lille, where Marshal Mortier was awaiting him, and whither Macdonald and the Duke d'Orleans had gone before him. The divisions of the army, separated from the Emperor by distance, and upon which the King still reckoned, hoping to rally them around him with the army of the north, rose in revolt one after another, in spite of the fidelity of the marshals under whose command they had been placed. Marshal Victor yielded, in spite of his energetic loyalty, in Champagne, to the irresistible seduction of example on his army. Oudinot, equally faithful, was vanquished at Metz by the sedition. Mortier restrained with difficulty the army under his orders at Lille; but the days were already numbered of that safety of the King, for which he had answered. The presence of the Duke d'Orleans, upon which the court had relied so much, produced no effect whatever upon the troops. They even spoke of driving away this prince unknown to them from Lille, or to seize upon him as a pledge to offer to the Emperor of their unshaken devotion. The Duke, on his part, fearful of compromising that personal and unknown future which he always affected to separate from the princes of his race, pandered to the patriotic feeling of the generals and officers, looked with consideration on the Bonapartist enthusiasm, fawned upon the tri-coloured flag, resigned himself to a

temporary retirement, which his plain sense showed him to be inevitable, and without betraying the King or his duties, occupied himself more about his future popularity than the exigencies of the present.

The personal army of the King, composed of the body guard, of the musketeers, the light dragoons, the volunteers of Paris, and some regiments of mounted grenadiers of the guard, rapidly followed the King on the road to Lille. Marshal Marmont commanded them, under the orders of the Count d'Artois, and of his son, the Duke de Berry.

XXXVIII.

The inhabitants of these departments gathered in crowds round the passage of these princes, and this young nobility, who marched between two living hedges of the populace of the towns, and the peasants of Picardy and Flanders, whose indignation against the Emperor and attachment to the Bourbons offered a marked contrast to the provinces of the east and the centre. These people of the north, less fickle and more reflecting, without having the fanaticism of Britanny, nourished a deep sentiment of fidelity and preference for the Bourbons. Being closer to the frontiers, and more exposed to the ravages and humiliations of war, they were the more attached to peace, of which these princes were to them the symbol. Less volatile and more just than the people of the centre of France, they rose also more readily, through sympathy, in favour of the King. This armed, but almost funereal cortege, accompanying this pacific prince, betrayed by his army, expelled from his capital by a military sedition, and coming to ask an asylum in the most distant of his citadels, filled all hearts with emotion, all eyes with tears. The roads he travelled resounded with a long and sorrowful cry of "Vive le Roi!" which was renewed from cabin to cabin, and from town to town. The people declined receiving the price of their services, of lodgings, and of provisions required by this little army. The farmers' cars and horses were gratuitously placed at the disposition of the dismounted men, the wounded, the sick, the children, the old men, and the

women that followed the columns. The most affecting attentions were lavished upon them: the entrance of the regiments into the towns or villages where they passed the night resembled great family meetings. Fathers of families, from the richest to the poorest, lavished upon the King's troops all they possessed. "Only bring us back," they said, "this King of peace and liberty; we will preserve for him our children and our hearts." An uncertain season between spring and winter, a cold and constant rain, roads broken up, harassed horses, raw soldiers, the command of Marshal Marmont relaxed, badly obeyed, and confused, frequent alarms on the flanks and rear of the columns, by the regiments of Napoleon, which followed the royal army at a distance, gave the troops more the appearance of a mob than a regular army. Wagons laden with young men and old, broken down by the unusual fatigue of a long march, gentlemen's and court carriages conveying the mothers, the wives, and the daughters of the ministers, the generals, and the emigrants; cannons and artillery wagons mixed with these equipages, the servants and the files of chargers and hunters belonging to the princes households, interrupted, broke, and retarded at every step the order and the marching of the troops The Count d'Artois and the Duke de Berry his son, on horseback exposed to the inclemency of the weather, drenched with rain, covered with mud, marched by the side of the columns, conversing familiarly with the youthful nobility, all of whom they knew personally. The people, on seeing them, uncovered and bowed their heads, and followed them with looks of compassion, and cries tempered with respect for misfortune. A country so dear and generous must have left profound impressions of regret and of hope in the hearts of the two princes. The general report in the army was, that they were marching upon Lille, where the King, joined by other divisions from the north of Normandy and Brittany, would show a front, upon that faithful soil, to the troops of Napoleon.

The first detachments, therefore, on leaving Amiens, took the route to Lille; but couriers, despatched from that city, and galloping towards Paris, met them with directions to retrace their steps, in order to take the road to Bethune. These

counter orders alarmed the princes, and made the army conjecture that the last hope of the royalists had vanished, and that the last refuge upon the French soil, where the King might await the awaking of France from its delusion, was sinking from under his feet

XXXIX.

These conjectures were too well founded. Louis XVIII. had arrived full of confidence at Lille, and resolved to dispute that city and that province against the invasion of his competitor, while waiting for a change of fortune. The whole city, the population of which was doubled by the loyalty of the towns and country adjacent, received the King with an enthusiasm, which the misfortune of his situation seemed to enhance and impassion still further. All swore to defend to the death within their walls the throne and the family of the Bourbons. The National Guard of Lille, accustomed to sieges, to extremities, and to triumphs of patriotism, during the wars of the revolution, did not take a vain oath. The King would have found there battalions worthy of coping with every peril. The city was proud of adding to its history the title of temporary capital of the monarchy, and of one day rivalling Orleans in preserving the life and glory of a prince superior to Charles VII. The King reviewed the National Guard, and confided in the safety of the asylum he was offered by such sturdy hearts. But when he appeared in front of the army, in spite of all the efforts made by the citizens to animate the regiments by their generous enthusiasm, they remained cold, gloomy, and silent; in the attitude of a passive resignation to discipline, but with the aspect of troops who restrain their impatience rather than promise their fidelity. It might be seen that their hearts were no longer for the King, and that their thoughts were already in Paris. The example, the voices, the gestures of Marshal Mortier, of Macdonald, of Berthier, of the generals who surrounded the King, could not draw a single acclamation from them. They seemed apprehensive of deceiving the King by an oath which they were burning to take to another. The

King was not deceived by their demeanour, and tears of indignation, ill restrained, stood in his eyes. He himself complained of his destiny; but he pitied still more that multitude so constant and so devoted, that was going to be domineered over by the army which had issued from itself, again to impose upon it despotism and war. He forced himself, however, to hope still, and returned to the palace which had been prepared for him, with the firm resolution of not quitting it. "If the troops," he said to Marshal Mortier, "wish to go and rejoin my enemy, open the gates for them, and let them abandon me. The National Guard, and my military household, which has followed me, will suffice for my defence upon the soil of France."

XL.

But the arrival of some of the body-guard, and some of the Swiss regiments of the guard, who had followed their route upon Lille from Amiens, and to whom the city-gates were about to be opened, decided the troops of the line in garrison to break out. They felt the danger of giving up to the army of the King the citadel and ramparts of a fortress, which they would have to re-conquer some days after, at the price of blood and civil war; and declared tumultuously in their barracks their resolution to oppose the entrance of these detachments of the King's guard. A council, composed of the King, the Duke d'Orleans, Marshals Mortier and Macdonald, and the Duke de Blacas, deliberated, on these preliminary murmurs of revolt, as to the part they ought to take. A prompt departure was resolved upon: the King hoped to find an asylum less imposing but more sure at Dunkirk, a strong and faithful town, defended by its walls on the land side, and open by sea to the assistance of the English, in case of extremity. He quitted Lille in the course of the day, escorted by some of his guard, and accompanied by the marshals and the Duke d'Orleans. The Duke, however, returned almost immediately into the city with Mortier, either to make another trial to retain the army in its duty, or to fraternize a few hours more with the generals whose favour he was con-

ciliating. He then also quitted the city, took a different direction from the King and the princes, and went to England, to separate his cause from that of his house; in the eyes of the country, and to prove by this isolation that he had no hand either in the civil or the European war which was about to rend his country. A far-sighted and able prince who would willingly profit by the advantages of his name, and by the assistance of Europe to his cause, but who did not wish that victories over his country should one day be made a subject of reproach against him, at the expense of some of his future popularity.

XLI.

Meanwhile the King, pursued by the rumour of defections, which followed or preceded him from town to town, learned on arriving at Ostend that the route to Dunkirk had been cut off to his army, and that the Count d'Artois and his military household, were on the road to Bethune, having no other asylum than Belgium. Marshal Berthier advised him to embark for England, convinced that the Emperor would not stop at the Belgian frontier, but that he would pursue Louis XVIII. as he had pursued the Duke d'Enghien, into the foreign territories. The King energetically resisted this advice: to cross the seas seemed to him a confession of despair of his right and of his cause. He despatched M. de Blacas to his brother the Count d'Artois, who was wandering at that moment on the extreme frontier, and demanded an asylum from the King of the Netherlands. This was coldly and ungraciously granted by the king, an ambitious prince, equivocal, selfish, and devoid of feeling for the unfortunate. He seemed secretly to enjoy the decay and humiliation of the house of Bourbon, whose throne he had the folly to covet for himself. The government of the Netherlands assigned the city of Ghent, a large aristocratical place, thinly peopled, and out of the way, as the only residence of the King and the remains of his court. Berthier, after having fulfilled his duty as far as the frontier, took leave of the King to go and seclude himself in Germany, equally far from the monarch whom he had faith-

fully escorted into exile, and from Napoleon whom he would not either serve or fight against. Louis XVIII., mortified but not discouraged by the rudeness of the King of the Netherlands, established himself at Ghent.

XLII.

The Count d'Artois, the Duke de Berry, Marmont, and their army, closely pressed by the regiments pushed forward on their rear, or manœuvring on their flanks, finding everywhere the fortresses in France closed against them, threw themselves into Bethune, the last fortified town on the French frontier, to wait there for news of the King They entered it on the evening of the 23rd without the appearance of their retreat and the conviction of their desperate cause, having in the least diminished the enthusiasm and feeling of the people of Bethune and the adjacent country for the King's cause. The city already surrounded on several sides, without ammunition or provisions, could not offer a long asylum to this little army imprisoned within its walls. After a short halt, to refresh the men and horses Marshal Marmont issued orders to march at four o'clock in the evening. The troops were to march across a fenny country, by the only paths now open to them towards the Belgian frontier, to place the princes at least in safety; but at the moment the heads of columns issued from the gates after the Count d'Artois and the Duke de Berry, a regiment of French cuirassiers, and another of light dragoons, drew up before the gate to prevent the passage of the King's household. The appearance of these two regiments caused a moment's hesitation; but the household troops and the grenadiers of the royal guard marched out, sword in hand, and drew up to attack the troops of Napoleon. There was an equal ardour on both sides, and some shots were already fired, when the Count d'Artois' horse starting aside and rearing at the report of the fire-arms, caused the household troops to imagine that the prince had been struck by a stray ball. A cry of anger and indignation arose from the ranks: it was thought that an attempt had been made on the lives of the princes,

though it appeared after all to have been only an accidental discharge. The troops were therefore going to advance on the enemy, when Marmont, recovering all his energy at the prospect of civil war, galloped forward on a white charger between the two armies, followed by the Duke de Berry and some officers of the royal troops. Addressing themselves to the troops of Napoleon, they showed them the numerous battalions and squadrons which were forming behind them upon the glacis of the place, and summoned them to retire to give a free passage to the French princes. The light dragoons and cuirassiers immediately retired, and took the route to Arras, while the princes and their squadrons re-entered the city.

XLIII.

As the royal army and the princes might be surrounded by a more imposing force during the night, Marmont induced the Count d'Artois and the Duke de Berry to avail themselves of the time still left them to reach the frontier in safety. The princes accordingly issued a proclamation to the army, stating that its duties having been fulfilled it was released from its oaths; that the King, compelled to take refuge in a foreign country, had nothing to offer to his faithful soldiers but the unknown and hazardous chances of exile, that he left them at liberty to return to their families or to follow him at the risk of fortune, and that the grateful princes now asked nothing farther from them than an escort to defend them from the insults of the French army during the night, and to open for them, if necessary, the route towards the Belgian frontier. The household troops and the grenadiers disputed the honour of this last service, and formed some squadrons to accompany the Count d'Artois and his son, under the command of Marmont: the remainder of the army continued in Bethune. Amongst these, groups were formed in the barracks and in the public squares; and orators mounted on wagons, or on caissons, with the proclamation of the princes in their hands, debated the question of emigration or submission to the new sovereign of the country. Some contended that honour

required from them the same duty on either side of a frontier: others insisted on the patriotism which commanded them never to raise an arm against the country which had given them birth, whoever might be the master or usurper of the throne. This latter opinion prevailed with the majority. They escorted the princes to the limits of the French territory, and there, deploring their unhappy fate, they took a melancholy leave of them, and returned to Bethune in the morning to follow the fate of the vanquished. A small number of the King's old guard, or of the sons of emigrants, enrolled in these troops, attached themselves entirely to the fortunes of the exiled princes, and formed the King's guard at Ghent.

For two whole days Bethune closed its gates against the troops of Napoleon, which assembled in numbers under its walls; but a mild and honourable capitulation soon intermingled the two armies, amongst which countrymen, friends, and brothers met together and embraced one another again in both camps. The royal army was disbanded; the household troops gave up their horses, but preserved their arms, and returned one by one to their families, Paris alone being interdicted to them. Thus vanished the royal cause in the north of France.

XLIV.

This cause had not had time to raise itself in La Vendée: the Duke de Bourbon was regarded there with all the interest and sympathy which were attached to the father of the Duke d'Enghien, but he possessed none of the requisites to impart to the war in these provinces the romantic and adventurous character which alone inspires a civil war. The generals of Napoleon's army who accompanied him, or who commanded at Angers, at Saumur, at Nantes, and at Rochelle, wished to form regular and paid armies instead of raising an insurgent population by enthusiasm. They therefore lost the time which Napoleon devoured in his rapid course, and his triumph outran the armaments. The Duke de Bourbon then threw himself into the heart of Anjou, where Augustus de la Rochejaquelin, a name dear to the royalist population, rallied the people on every

side, and enlisted them in the service of the prince. His ardour, which the slaughter of his kindred had not quenched, communicated itself to the neighbouring departments. Suzannet, Sapineaud, D'Autichamp, La Rosière, Canuel, old chiefs of the great Vendean war, organised the insurrection of their cantons; but long submission had deadened their hearts; the illusions of the first war were dissipated; the cause, though still dear to them, was no longer unanimous. Revolution and glory had, in the course of time, penetrated into the minds of the people; the towns were all patriotic, the country worn out, the voice of the tocsin unheeded. Bonaparte's columns advanced by every route towards La Vendée, striking terror into their movements, and the prince scarcely found safety even where he had hoped for vengeance. The general discouragement seized upon him; and, accompanied by some faithful friends, he wandered from chateau to chateau by night marches, to approach the sea-shore, and embark for Spain. La Vendée surprised, or slumbering, no longer palpitated except in the hearts of La Rochejaquelin and of some chiefs who remained to watch the hour of insurrection which the Duke de Bourbon had missed. The roads and towns from Paris to Bordeaux and Toulouse were already open to Napoleon, and threatened to send reinforcements to the armies opposed to the Duke d'Angoulême, who was still fighting in the south.

XLV.

This young prince, the least popular and the least martial in appearance of all the princes of his house, inspired by the strict feeling of his duty, and by the masculine energy of the Duchess d'Angoulême, his wife, displayed in this crisis of fortune the *sang-froid*, the intelligence, and the boldness, which do honour to lost causes though they cannot restore them.

The news of the landing of Bonaparte had surprised the Duke and the Duchess d'Angoulême at Bordeaux, in the midst of fêtes given to the daughter of Louis XVI., to celebrate the visit of gratitude which she owed to the first city in which her husband had once more found his country in 1814. They

arrived there on the 5th March, on board a triumphal bark, under a salute from the cannon in the forts and the vessels in the roadstead. The city of Bordeaux, which had given its name to the decimated faction of La Gironde, nourished resentment against the revolution for the blood it had shed of the Girondists. Bonaparte had closed the seas, the source of its riches, against it, by the continental blockade; a suicidal measure by which he famished the ports and commerce of his own Empire, to injure the commerce of England, which he only caused to change the scene of its operations and to aggrandize itself by diverting it to America, India, and China. For all these reasons Bordeaux was, from feeling as well as interest, the city of the Restoration: terror also conduced to this result; for it was the first city which had deserted the cause of Napoleon, and his return could bode for it nothing but vengeance. The women and young girls of Bordeaux decided on drawing themselves the carriage of the Duchess d'Angoulême, the idol of their enthusiasm and veneration, on her debarkation. The pavement was strewn with flowers, as in a procession of the pontiffs when carrying holy relics. The walls of the houses were decorated with beautiful draperies, the rich and elegant furniture of the drawing rooms. The prince on horseback was surrounded by a guard of honour, composed of all the youth of the city and the Vendean provinces, the capital of which was at this moment the city of the 12th March. After this splendid reception fêtes succeeded fêtes, without exhausting either the welcome of the people, or the gratitude of the royal couple. The army itself, under the command of General Decaen, seemed to participate in this intoxication of fidelity, which threw the whole population into a delirium. Acclamations and oaths of allegiance resounded at all the reviews: the presence of the victim of the Temple seemed to sanctify this delirium and to make a religion of royalty. Nobody dreamt that at that very moment Napoleon, with three little barks, was ploughing the waves of the Mediterranean, bringing defection and ruin to a cause which in Bordeaux was sacred to all hearts.

XLVI.

On the night of the 9th of March, in the midst of the preparations which the city was making for the anniversary fête of the 12th of March of the preceding year, for the restoration accomplished at Bordeaux, a courier of Marshal Macdonald, despatched from Lyons at the moment of the failure there of the Count d'Artois, brought to the Duke d'Angoulême the news of the landing and of the first successes of Bonaparte. The prince also received from the King and his father the authority to assemble all the troops of the right bank of the Rhône, to put himself in communication with the army of Massena, operating on the left bank, and to cut off, pursue, and crush Napoleon when he should be stopped under the walls of Lyons. The Duke and Duchess could not believe in the ill success of their cause on a soil which throbbed everywhere for them with love and welcome. They kept, however, the secret of this intelligence in their own hearts, in order not to interrupt by civil disquietudes the fête which was preparing for them by the trade of Bordeaux. At this they appeared with placid features, repressing their presentiments under an apparent ease of mind, and a deceitful serenity of language. But the prince quitting the fête in the middle of the night, departed without further delay to execute the orders of the King, accompanied only by an officer of his guards. This was the Duke de Guiche, the companion of his childhood, a man of prudent counsel, of chivalrous bravery, of a name celebrated in literature as well as war, with an exterior which charmed courts and camps, and who served him as aide-de-camp, in which capacity he was honoured with the intimacy of the prince, and merited his entire confidence. In the divisions they passed through the Duke d'Angoulême despatched in every direction orders to concentrate all the disposable forces upon Nismes.

XLVII.

The Duchess having remained at Bordeaux to maintain

by her presence the fidelity and enthusiasm of this city and the surrounding royalist provinces, and to forward, as occasion required it, volunteer reinforcements to the army of the Duke, assembled around her in the morning the superior officers of the regiments which composed the numerous garrisons of Bordeaux, and announced to them without trepidation the services which the King expected from them, and the fidelity which she herself hoped to find amongst their troops. Affected, but in no way disturbed, the generals and colonels did not hesitate to answer for their soldiers as for themselves, in whom the very soul of the country seemed to be concentred. The popular enthusiasm subdued any wavering in the army. The royalists of La Vendée, and of the intermediate provinces, La Rochejaquelin, Ravez, Peyronnet, Martignac, Gauthier, De Segur, and Montmorency, flocked with one heart around the princess, as another royalist Gironde, holding councils, opening subsidies, enrolling volunteers, arming themselves to fight with heart and hand, and foreshadowing, during these days of peril to their country, the varied species of celebrity which attended them at a later period in the army, the legislative chambers, and the ministries of the monarchy. The Baron de Vitrolles, invested with unlimited powers by the King at Toulouse, and bearing the same ample authority for the Duchess at Bordeaux, arrived from Paris with disclosures of the most serious nature from the court. He animated the public mind with the ardour which inspired his own, attended a council of defence where the Duchess spoke with feeling, General Decaen, commanding the troops in garrison, with loyalty, and M. Lainé with the heroism and the composure of a man whose conscience and opinions go hand in hand. They did not affect to conceal the difficulty of keeping the troops, who were at first loyally disposed, in an attitude which every forward step of Bonaparte was beginning to shake. They did not dare to remove them from the princess, lest their fidelity might waver in her absence; nor yet to retain them in Bordeaux, fearful that their insurrection might overawe the city. They were therefore incessantly kept in motion, in reviews and fêtes, that constant occupation should prevent them from

being corrupted, and that their contact with the people might shame them for being less devoted to their princess than to their military souvenirs and predilections.

XLVIII.

On the 26th, a report was current amongst the regiments that their fidelity was suspected, and that it was proposed to disarm and make them evacuate the fortifications. This rumour, industriously spread by the secret partisans of Napoleon who had been sent into the town, served as a pretext for signs of ill-temper and discontent amongst the troops. At a grand review made by General Decaen to clear up these doubts, symptoms of disaffection were manifested, which dissipated all illusion of the royalists. A sudden sedition broke out in the garrison of Blaye, in the neighbourhood of Bordeaux, where several soldiers had already torn from their shakos the metal plates bearing the King's cipher, to make room for the eagles which they were burning to resume. Cries of fidelity were put down by silence, their features revealing what was passing in their hearts. A regiment which had been ordered to march to Blaye, with a detachment of National Guards, to quell the defection of the troops, actually refused to obey. General Clausel, an able man and a bold soldier, had been appointed governor of these provinces by Bonaparte: though without troops when he accepted this important post, he advanced with a few battalions which had joined him on his route; and without troubling himself about the great number of royalist volunteers, of the still undecided army of Decaen, or the presence of the Duchess, he summoned the neighbouring towns to recognise his power and the sovereignty of the Emperor's name. Clausel, with a handful of soldiers, already spoke with the voice of a master, imitating the confidence of Napoleon, spreading false intelligence, corresponding by nocturnal messages, and by signals agreed upon with the intriguers in the army of the Duchess, speaking of her in his proclamations, of her courage, her misfortunes, and her illusions, as a man who does not insult weakness and misfortune, but who

commands in the name of destiny. A warrior made for such enterprises as this, he marched with 200 men and 80 dragoons to oppose an army of 10,000 men, a city with 100,000 inhabitants, and a population of 30,000 of excited royalists. But he knew, from a long experience of revolutions and of civil wars, what may be done by audacity and promptitude, with a handful of compact troops against hesitating and ill-cemented forces: it was in his case the difference between the ball and the dust it scatters. Clausel, moreover, possessed a naturally politic disposition, calculated to dare everything against the laws, and to risk all against the vicissitudes of events. But, above all, he was favoured in this campaign by the secret wishes of the army, which he was going, not to attack, but to seduce, and which assured him of assistance.

XLIX

Decaen and the military council of Bordeaux, not daring to risk the troops of the line in contact with the small column of Clausel, detached a body of volunteer National Guards, of 500 men, to stop his progress at the bridge of the Dordogne. This bridge having been bravely disputed by the people of Bordeaux, was taken and retaken during several hours' contest, and finally remained in possession of the royalists, who hoisted the *drapeau blanc* there, over the corpses of some of Clausel's grenadiers. But while the inhabitants of Bordeaux were gaining this first advantage in the name of the King, the numerous garrison of the citadel of Blaye broke into open insurrection, under a salute of artillery, and marched out, in spite of its principal officers, to give Clausel an army, which promised him also that of Bordeaux. The unfortunate General Decaen, governor of the city, being summoned by the princess to put his troops in motion to march against the insurgents, could not obey, and was unable to resist. Convinced of the inutility of a struggle, in which his arms were broken beforehand, and of the danger of a sedition in the midst of a battle, both to the city and the Duchess herself, he timidly recommended submission to necessity. The National Guard and the volunteers became

indignant: M. Lainé proposed a plan of defence by the citizens alone, which equalled the resolution of his own heart, and the heroism of Saragossa; while the Duchess shuddered with shame and despair at the idea of giving up without fighting a country where every heart was favourable to her cause, and where arms alone were wanting in the hands of her friends.

L.

Meanwhile, a young officer of the Bordeaux volunteers, M. de Martignac, whose courage was equal to his eloquence, had had a conference with Clausel, in advance of the bridge of the Dordogne, to ascertain the intentions of the general, and to endeavour to retard his march upon the city. Clausel spoke with deference of the Duchess d'Angoulême, and with affection of the prince, from whom he had received a short time before, at Toulouse, the honours and the decorations which the Bourbons squandered in vain amongst Napoleon's generals. He even appeared to be troubled at and to feel for the dangers which a woman, compelled soon to fly from a city in a state of military insurrection, would have to encounter in her retreat. He informed M. de Martignac that everything was undermined in Bordeaux under her feet, that the troops were all for him, that the correspondence between his army and the army of Decaen passed through the air by signals agreed upon, and that he should enter the city and the forts at a day and hour agreed upon. He wrote to this effect a letter to the princess, imperious and respectful at the same time, calling upon her not to attempt a useless struggle, and offering her the safety and the honours due to her rank, her sex, and her character. M. de Martignac took charge of this letter, and delivered it to the Duchess, who read it with the impassibility of a soul accustomed from her birth to the evils of destiny. She communicated its contents to her councillors, and to the officers of the civic militia, when a general cry of indignation arose from all ranks. The whole city flew to arms: the military staff, the council-general of the department, the municipal council, the authorities, and the citizens, assembled in a tumult. General

Capitulation of the royalist troops.

Decaen was called to answer for his means of defence; but he could answer for nothing if firing once commenced between his soldiers and those of Clausel. M. Lainé vowed by the dignity of his country, "that the history of Bordeaux and of France should not be dishonoured by the abandonment of a princess, descended from Maria Theresa, demanding arms from Frenchmen to defend her, and compelled to fly before the sedition of some pretorians." M. de Martignac affirmed, "that the National Guards whom he had left at the bridge of the Dordogne would die at their post rather than leave a passage for the invasion of their city."

It was midnight when he went to carry the answer of the city to Clausel; but during his absence the bridge had been forced, and the army of Clausel had crossed over. Before day break they had marched to make their appearance on the right bank of the Garonne, in front of Bordeaux, to excite from thence an insurrection in the army of Decaen. At this intelligence, the town council and that of the Duchess resolved to accept the conditions offered by the general, and demanded of him four-and-twenty hours, solely to secure the dignity of the princess's departure, and the honour and safety of the city. Clausel consented, and remained motionless on the right bank of the river, without displaying the tri-coloured flag, to avoid wounding the feelings of the King's niece. This resolution of the councils responded badly and timidly to the intrepidity of heart displayed by the princess, and she evinced her disdain in her features. The people, on learning these conditions, sympathised in her feelings, and broke out in imprecations against the cowardice of their chiefs, and the perfidy of the soldiers. The National Guards rushed out in tumult from their houses, and precipitated themselves upon the gates of the city; while Donnadieu, one of the boldest and most enterprising of Bonaparte's generals, displaying the same qualities in the service of the Bourbons, offered himself as their commander. Blood was about to flow between the city and Clausel, and between the city and the garrison; while General Decaen, being again questioned, at length replied, that his troops would not fire against their brethren of Clausel's army. The royalists, in their irritation,

reproached him with imbecility, and accused him of conni vance and perfidy. "How can it be," cried the Duchess, "that troops for whom you answered to me yesterday, refuse to-day to fight for their King, for their colours, for the city which is confided to their bravery, and for me? No! this is cowardice and criminality that I can only believe when I have seen it. Assemble the regiments in their barracks: I shall go and judge for myself of the hearts and arms of your soldiers!" It was in vain that the generals, uneasy at a resolution which might provoke insult from an unruly soldiery, but little under the command of their chiefs, sought to deter her; the princess listened to nothing but her own intrepidity. She proceeded to the barracks of St. Raphael, passed down the ranks, had the troops formed in hollow square, and harangued herself the officers and soldiers, with a voice of masculine courage, and of touching entreaty, interrupted by the sobs of the royal supplicant.

"Officers and soldiers!" she said to them, "you know the events that agitate France. A usurper, followed by seditionaries, has come to deprive of his crown my uncle and your King, whom you have sworn to defend. Bordeaux is threatened by a handful of revolted soldiers; but the National Guard, the citizens, and the people are determined to oppose the assault of these armed bands. This is the moment for you to show that the oaths of French soldiers are not vain words. I have come here to remind you of them, and to judge for myself of your dispositions. Are you resolved with me to defend the city, and to preserve it for the King? Answer frankly; question yourselves freely; I prefer a refusal to treason: speak!"

LI.

The soldiers' faces were cast downwards, their looks averted, and their lips were mute at this interrogation. The princess waited, looked, blushed, and felt that her hope was fading fast; but taking courage from despair, and regardless of consequences now that all was lost: "You no longer recollect, then," she resumed, in a tone of reproach and reprehension,

"the oaths that you renewed to me only a few hours back. Well, then, if any amongst you still recollect them, and continue faithful to their honour and their King, let them quit the ranks and say so!" A few swords were raised above the close ranks of the officers, as if they were offered in her defence; and she counted them with a sorrowful but not a discouraged look. "You are very few," she said; "but never mind, you are brave men: we know at least upon whom we can reckon." The soldiers, silent and motionless, contemplated this scene without suffering it to affect them; for nature was counteracted in their hearts by the name of Napoleon. The princess retired in deep humiliation, while the officers in confusion endeavoured to make up for their coldness by their respectful attentions. They vowed that no personal offence should be offered with impunity to an heroic and unfortunate lady confided to their honour: that the safety of her friends would be as sacred to them as her own; and that the army would not allow the National Guard to be insulted. "I am out of the question," replied the princess, with contempt for her own dangers; "the matter concerns the King. Once more, will you serve him?" "We will not fight against our brethren; we will not accept a civil war; we will only obey our country!" replied the troops. The princess went away indignant but not vanquished, and ordered her attendants to conduct her to the second barracks.

LII.

But from this she was driven away by the sedition, the vociferations, and the frenzy of the soldiers; her ears being offended at a distance by cries of "Vive l'Empereur!" She was determined, however, to brave her fortune to the very last, and visited the third barracks in the castle. Accompanied by a little group of officers and dismayed citizens, she passed the arches and the bridges of the citadel, and penetrated into the court. The troops were drawn up on parade, but scarcely restrained by their officers; they were murmuring against the orders which confined them to their barracks, and were striking the butt-ends of their muskets against the ground.

in their impatience. The presence of the princess, who came to solicit and importune for that fidelity which was betrayed in their hearts, increased their impatience and excitement. She was not discouraged, however, at their aspect, but addressed them as she walked along the ranks. "What!" she exclaimed, "is it to the regiment of Angoulême, to this regiment to which I was proud to give my name, that I speak in vain? Can you then have forgotten so soon all the favours with which you have been loaded by my husband? By him whom you called your prince? And I, to whom you have so often renewed your oath of fidelity, I, who have presented you with your colours, I, whom you have called your princess! What! you recognise me, then, no longer?"

The soldiers were moved, and blushed at these reproaches, the justice and force of which were confirmed by all their recollections of the past year. Some officers who acted in concert with Clausel, repressed these feelings by spiteful and repulsive gestures; seeing which, the soldiers remained inaccessible to pity or generosity. The princess then letting her hands fall from her eyes, wept openly: "Oh, heaven!" she exclaimed, looking upwards, with an accent of reproach, "it is too cruel, after twenty years of misfortune and exile, to be forced again to quit my country! And yet I have never ceased, in exile or on the footsteps of the throne, to offer up my prayers for the happiness of the country! For I am a Frenchwoman," she added, with a bitterness of feeling that she could not repress; "I keep my vows, I believe in honour, although I am but a weak woman; and you—go! You are no longer Frenchmen!"

The regiment of Angoulême preserved silence, however; but the 62nd regiment of the line replied by vociferations and menaces against the National Guard, which rebounded even upon the princess. One officer alone of this regiment, indignant at these insults, drew his sword, and placed himself by the side of the Duchess d'Angoulême. "This is too much!" he exclaimed, setting his soldiers at defiance; "I, at least, will keep my oath; I shall not quit you!" Fanatical cries of "Vive l'Empereur!" responded to this act of courage; the soldiers breaking their ranks, and desirous, apparently, of rushing upon

the group of royalists. The Duchess was conjured to fly, but remained standing on the spot without trepidation, braving the crowd of insurgents, till the rappel being beaten the troops resumed their ranks, and the princess retired, bearing with her the despair of her cause, and the grief of a second exile, of which heaven alone could tell the duration.

LIII

On returning to her palace, the Duchess d'Angoulême commissioned M. de Martignac, the negociator of the previous evening, to bear to General Clausel her recommendations in favour of Bordeaux: "You will tell him," she said, "that in happier times I had distinguished him amongst the generals for his intelligence and courage, and he frequently assured me, at that time, of his gratitude and affection. Tell him that I ask only one proof of his remembrance; which is, to treat with respect the city which I love, and which I surrender to him. Whatever good he does for Bordeaux shall be felt by my heart as if he had done it for myself."

Meanwhile, the National Guard and the people, animated by a civic feeling, had assembed for action, and with loud cries demanded to be led against the barracks, that the forts should be delivered up to them, and that they should be stationed at the advanced posts. The Duchess hastened to the front of the citizens' line, and standing up in her open carriage, in order to exhibit to the observation of all her mournful countenance, and to convince as well by looks as by words: "I come," she exclaimed, when the acclamations called forth by her presence had subsided; "I come to ask you for one last proof of affection; promise me your obedience to what I shall now demand." "We swear it!" cried the multitude, expecting to receive the order for an attack. "Well, then," resumed the princess, "I have been to visit and interrogate the troops, who in their hearts are attached to our enemies. Neither my presence, my voice, nor my reproaches could recall them to their duty. To fight, therefore, would only be to sacrifice you and your children for a cause that is betrayed. You have

done enough for the honour of your city and of your cause; resign yourselves to fate, and reserve for the King, my uncle, faithful friends for happier times! I take all upon myself, and order you to lay down your arms!" "No, no!" replied a thousand voices; "we will die for the liberty of our country, for the government that we have been the first to proclaim for the King and for you!" The ranks were broken, and the crowds eagerly pressed around the wheels of the carriage, with impassioned features, voices, and gestures; they kissed the hands of the daughter of Louis XVI., and formed a canopy of naked swords over her head. The tears of the people were mingled with hers, crying for vengeance on the mutinous soldiery. A mingling of hearts, a tumult of tenderness, of which Clausel and his troops saw the commotion, and heard the clamours from the opposite bank of the Dordogne, attested to heaven, to the rivers, and to the soldiers, the violence which the army was doing to the nation and to honour, while batteries of cannon directed against the city, and menacing the multitude, were preparing to destroy them. The Duchess returned to her residence, accompanied by crowds of adherents, mad with rage and grief. There she assembled the generals to give them an order to capitulate. "I give you up the place," she said to them; "and it is you, gentlemen, who must answer for the lives of the people." They promised her to throw themselves between their troops and the inhabitants.

LIV.

But while they were thus answering for their regiments a firing of musketry was heard under the windows of the palace: it was a party of the National Guard which had fired upon a doubtful battalion, and the latter were demanding vengeance for the assassination. The wounded were carried by under the eyes of the princess, and the officers were interposing in vain to prevent the massacre. The regiments forced open the gates of their barracks to rush upon the people, and drew up in order of battle in the public squares. The tri-coloured flag hoisted as a signal by Clausel, on the right bank of the river, was hoisted

also at the same instant on the forts in the city. Night at length fell upon this scene of treason, violence, mourning, and death; and the Duchess profited by the darkness to leave unobserved a city which would have kept her by force, and where her longer stay would have occasioned the massacre of the citizens by the army. An escort of mounted National Guards, and of devoted adherents, conducted her to Pauilhac, where she embarked at daybreak, and was conveyed on board an English ship of war. Here she had scarcely arrived when the river was covered with boats filled with National Guards and citizens of Bordeaux, desirous of seeing her to the very last, and of expressing to her the impassioned farewell of this part of France. "Adieu!" cried the daughter of Louis XVI., her eyes filled with tears, and leaning towards the boats that were crowded with her friends and defenders: "When I return I shall recognise you all again!" A rising gale of wind drowned the last acclamations of the people, while the tempestuous ocean seemed desirous of throwing back the princess upon the ports of France. Her vessel was tossed about for some days without being able to anchor on the coast of Spain; but at length she arrived at Passage, where she received from the King of Spain the offer of a hospitable reception at Madrid. Feeling herself necessary, however, to the King, whose exile she had counselled and consoled for so many years, she preferred joining him, and embarked again for that purpose. After enduring fresh tempests on the passage, she at length arrived at Plymouth, and proceeded thence to London, where she was hospitably received by the Duke de la Châtre, ambassador at the court of St. James's of her uncle, whom she soon after proceeded to Ghent to join. This heroic princess, whose fate it was to battle with misfortune from the cradle to the grave, and to whom nature had refused some of those feminine graces which enlist the sympathies of men, inherited, however, from her mother the courage which enabled her to brave her destiny and to dispense with human pity. "She is the only man of her race!" exclaimed Napoleon when informed by Clausel of the conduct, the vigour, and the heroism of the Duchess d'Angoulême at Bordeaux. He was mistaken,

however, for the Duke d'Angoulême, the husband of this princess, showed at the same moment in another part of the south, that if this family had not the genius and good fortune of a great captain, it possessed at least in him the heart of a soldier.

LV.

After the departure of the Duchess, M. Lainé, president of the Chamber of Deputies, disdained to save himself by flight from the vengeance of Napoleon, who had twice proscribed without being able to intimidate him. This citizen, who represented in his own person the violence done to the national representation, feeling that his head must answer to the tyranny for the dignity of his vanquished country, published the following protest, and had it posted up in every part of France:—

"In the name of the French nation, and as president of the chamber of its representatives, I hereby protest against all the decrees by which the oppressor of France affects to pronounce the dissolution of the chambers. I consequently declare that all landowners are hereby exempted from the payment of contributions to the agents of Napoleon Bonaparte, and that all families must avoid furnishing, by way of conscription, or other recruiting whatsoever, men for his armed forces. Since so outrageous an attempt has been made on the rights and liberties of the French people, it is their duty individually to maintain them. Absolved for a long time past from all allegiance towards Napoleon Bonaparte, and bound by their wishes and their oaths to their country and their King, they would justly incur the opprobrium of other nations and of posterity, if they did not avail themselves of the means in the possession of individuals. All history, while preserving an eternal gratitude for those men who in all free countries have refused assistance to tyranny, loads with contempt those citizens who so far forget their dignity as men to submit themselves to despicable agents. It is with the persuasion that the French are sufficiently convinced of their own rights to impose upon me a sacred duty, that I publish the present protest; which,

in the name of those honourable colleagues over whom I preside, and of France which they represent, will be deposited in the archives, safe from the attempts of the tyrant, to have recourse to, when necessary.

"As the Duke of Otranto, calling himself minister of police, has insulted me with a notification that I may remain in safety at Bordeaux, and apply myself to the labours of my profession, I declare that if his master and his agents do not respect me sufficiently to make me die for my country, I despise them too much to receive their insulting notice. Let them know that after having read, on the 20th of March, in the hall of the deputies, the King's proclamation, at the moment the soldiers of Bonaparte were entering Paris, I came to the country whose deputy I am; that I am here at my post, under the orders of the Duchess d'Angoulême, occupied in preserving the honour and the liberty of a part of France, while waiting till the rest be delivered from the most shameful tyranny that has ever threatened a great people. No; I shall never submit to Napoleon Bonaparte; and he who has been honoured with the office of chief of the representatives of France, aspires to the honour of being in his country the first victim of the enemy of the King, of the country, and of liberty (which will not happen) if he were reduced to the inability of contributing to its defence."

LVI.

The Duke d'Angoulême left Bordeaux, as we have seen, on the 10th of March, and had promptly summoned to him all the regiments, and all the volunteers which the valley of the Rhône could concentrate, after the rapid passage of Napoleon, in order to revive the royal cause on his route, reconquer Grenoble, Lyons, and Burgundy, and to march in pursuit of him on Paris. These military forces were few in number, but the volunteers supplied the deficiency by intrepidity, while their fidelity seemed to redouble by the successive defections of the troops. The prince, concentrating his little main body at Sisteron and at Pont-Saint-Esprit, anxious on the one hand to retake Lyons, and on the

other disquieted by the uncertain attitude of Massena (whose threatening army occupied Marseilles, Provence, and Avignon, and could take the royalists between two fires), hastened his movements. He had gained over, on passing Marseilles, three regiments from Massena, who had fallen back upon Toulon; and 3,000 volunteers from that city had marched with these regiments to join the King's nephew. Twelve or thirteen thousand men constituted the whole of his force, and these he divided into two corps: the first being confided to General Loverdo, having for his lieutenants, Generals Gardanne and Ernouf. The Duke d'Angoulême himself commanded the second corps, General d'Aultanne being the chief of his staff. The column of Loverdo, directed to operate on the left bank of the Rhône, followed the route traced by Napoleon in advancing from Antibes upon Grenoble. It advanced, to the number of 7,000 men, with six pieces of cannon, without obstruction for the first few days; but at Lyons, at Grenoble, and in Dauphiny, the Bonapartist generals and the National Guards, who had opened these cities and provinces to the Emperor, and who dreaded the vengeance of the Bourbons, took up arms, *en masse*, to stop this reflux of the south. In the neighbourhood of Gap, Loverdo encountered the first columns of these levies, and the first battalions, which had hastened from Grenoble to dispute his passage through the defiles. Gardanne, and two of the three regiments of Massena, the 58th and the 83rd of the line, instead of fighting, went over to the Emperor, uncovering the volunteers of the south, who were thus betrayed and dispersed before they could come to action. Ernouf and Loverdo fell back upon Marseilles; and the right wing of the royalist army was therefore entirely dissolved.

The Duke d'Angoulême, without being disconcerted at a defection for which so many others had prepared him, being covered on his right by the Rhône, continued his advance alone. He was stopped at Montelimart by General Debelle, at the head of Bonapartist volunteers, assembled by the sound of the tocsin, but obtained a brilliant advantage over him, which was due to the intrepidity of the Count d'Escars, who com-

manded his advance-guard. This success, and the paucity of troops which the Emperor had left in this valley of the Rhône, made the Duke d'Angoulême and his army anticipate a prompt occupation of Lyons. The prince, confiding in the volunteers, commanded by Colonel Magnier for the safety of the right bank, crossed the river, and advanced, to resume upon the left bank the place which the defection of the two regiments had abandoned to the Bonapartists. After a brilliant combat at Loriol, he came up with the imperial army, fortified at the passage of the Drôme. The position, defended by cannon, some battalions of the line, cavalry, gendarmerie, and numerous regiments of National Guards from the mountains of Dauphiny, appeared impregnable. The prince, equally free from emotion as from boasting, evinced the courage of a soldier, and the eye of a chief. He advanced to the bridge to reconnoitre, under the fire of the Bonapartists; and while he opened upon them the fire of two batteries of cannon and howitzers, he sent a battalion of volunteers to ford the river, with orders to take the enemy in flank, while he himself should force the bridge with the 10th regiment of the line of his army. In spite of the entreaties of his officers, who wished to restrain his ardour, and who held his horse's reins for that purpose, he dashed forward upon the bridge, strewn with dead and wounded, at the head of twenty-five light infantry. His enthusiasm carried and crushed everything before it; cries of "Vive le Roi!" resounding on the right, and the *drapeau blanc* flying on the hills, drove back in disorder on the road to Valence the Emperor's battalions. The royal army crossed the Drôme and advanced without meeting any obstacles upon Valence; the prince there established his head quarters, while waiting until General Ernouf, who had occupied Sisteron on the 27th of March, and who was to advance upon Grenoble by the foot of the Alps, should be abreast of him. The following day he occupied Romans with an advanced-guard, and thus became master of the passage of the Isère, and of the outlets of Grenoble, and of Lyons. But, considering the defection of Gardanne and his regiments, his right uncovered, his doubts of Massena, the occupation of Avignon by hostile regiments, the

left bank of the Rhône rising at the call of the half-pay officers, Lyons filling with infantry battalions, General Chabert countermarching from Grenoble with the seduced regiments, General Piré barring him from the right bank of the Isère, Grouchy debouching from Lyons at the head of an army of the line. Nismes ready to throw forward two regiments upon Pont-Saint-Esprit, and to cut off his retreat from Provence, the news from Paris, and from Bordeaux, that he had one regiment only, the 10th, remaining faithful, in the midst of this general desertion of regiments crumbling away from him, the lives of this handful of devoted volunteers that he was going to sacrifice to a lost cause and a fruitless glory; after weighing all these circumstances, the prince decided on submitting to necessity. He fell back upon Pont-Saint-Esprit, and found that the battalions he had left there had been attacked and dispersed by the army of Nismes, commanded by General Gilly, whom the prince had dismissed on suspicion when passing through Nismes. Gilly, who was now irritated as well as disloyal, had re-formed an army in the rear of the prince, to cut off his retreat, or to attack him in his march upon Lyons. The tocsin resounded throughout the mountains, calling to arms the Cevennes, and the Protestant peasants of these valleys, where mutual persecutions had left a leaven of vengeance, which every political event threw into a state of fermentation. The prince was obliged to stop, hemmed in on all sides, at Lapalud, where he was conjured to shelter himself from the captivity, and perhaps from the death of the princes of his race, a presage of which they showed him in the fate of the Duke d'Enghien. Trustworthy guides offered to conduct him into Piedmont by the mountain roads; but he was indignant at the idea of not sharing the fate of the brave soldiers who were compromised in his cause, and he resolved to save them or perish with them. At this crisis, Gilly proposed an honourable convention to him, which was discussed and signed, on the part of the prince by Baron de Damas, the chief of the staff of the royalist army. The prince went in person to Pont-Saint-Esprit to execute this convention, and entered that place on the faith of a compact which guaranteed his liberty and retirement from

the country; but General Grouchy, who had entered the town before him, refused to recognise the capitulation of Gilly, and arrested the prince. The Emperor being informed by the telegraph of the prey which had fallen into his hands, authorised Grouchy to cause him to be conducted a prisoner to Cette, and embarked there for Spain. Grouchy hastened to execute this order, for fear of a countermand, which in fact was not long in coming. But it was too late, for the Duke had already embarked, and was on his way to Barcelona. The Emperor himself, in giving this doubtful countermand, could not desire to retain his vanquished enemy in his hands. Such a captive would have embarrassed his policy; for keeping him prisoner would be a reproach, and putting him to death would be a crime. It was not Napoleon's interest to excite the animosity of royal families against himself. His letter to Grouchy was harsh but dignified: it ran as follows:—

"At the Palace of the Tuileries, April 11, 1815

"Monsieur le Comte Grouchy—The ordonnance of the King of the 6th March, and the convention signed at Vienna on the 13th by his ministers, would warrant me to treat the Duke d'Angoulême as this ordonnance and this declaration would willingly treat me and my family. But persevering in the resolution which had induced me to order that the members of the Bourbon family might freely depart from France, my intention is, that you give orders that the Duke d'Angoulême be conducted to Cette, where he shall be embarked, and that you watch over his safety, and save him from all ill treatment. You will only be careful to keep back the funds which have been taken from the public treasury, and to demand of the Duke d'Angoulême his promise to restore the crown diamonds, which are the property of the nation.

"You will thank in my name the National Guards, for the zeal and patriotism which they have displayed, and the attachment they have evinced for me in these important circumstances.

"NAPOLEON."

The army of the Duke d'Angoulême, brave, well commanded, victorious in three actions, wherein the blood and the personal bravery of the prince had raised the Bourbon name from its military discredit; but betrayed by its own regiments, with the exception of one only, the 10th, a model of constancy, surrounded by three armies, and swamped amongst hostile populations, was still further decimated after the capitulation by the assassinations of the Protestants, forerunners of those of the Catholics. There remained of this campaign of the Duke d'Angoulême in the south nothing but a sterile glory for his cause, a solid esteem for his name in the hearts of his troops, and the duty nobly accomplished of at least disputing France with the warrior who subjugated all but honour.

BOOK TWENTIETH.

State of the public mind in France after the 20th March—Duplicity of Napoleon—Aspect of the Congress of Vienna—New arrangement of Europe by the Congress—Policy of M. de Talleyrand—The news reaches Vienna of the departure of Napoleon from Elba—His march through France, and the flight of Louis XVIII.—Indignation of the Sovereigns against France and the Bourbons—Struggle of M. de Talleyrand against the Allies—Conference of the Congress on the 13th of March—Speech of M. de Talleyrand—Declaration of the 13th of March—Treaty of the 25th—War Convention of the 31st.

I.

A general silence prevailed throughout France; for Europe, it was expected, would commence the discussion of the great change which had been effected in so short a time. The foreign communications carefully intercepted by the Emperor's police, did not allow the penetration from abroad of any news whatever, calculated to deprive the betrayed people of those hopes of peace which Napoleon had spread with his own mouth on the route from Cannes to Paris, and which the writings of his confidants, and the rumours of his agents, continued to multiply through the country. It was hoped that the rapidity of this revolution would disconcert all the resolves of the congress; that the family feelings created by Marie-Louise and her son, between Napoleon and the Emperor of Austria, would resume their sway; that M. de Metternich, so long familiarised with the imperial court, would not be averse to new capitulations of conscience with the ruler of France; that the Emperor Alexander would revive his former friendship in his heart; that the secondary powers of Germany, humbled and discontented with the portion assigned to them of the spoils of

State of the public mind in France.

the French Empire, and with the yoke they were compelled to accept from the ascendancy of the great monarchies of the north, would, in their resentment, again throw themselves into the arms of France; finally, that Murat, King of Naples, for an instant unfaithful to the cause of his brother-in-law and his benefactor, would seize the opportunity to effect a reconciliation with the Emperor, which, while it would tend to his own safety, would throw the weight of all Italy into the balance of war or of peace. England herself, exasperated by the opposition against Lord Castlereagh, and complaining with bitterness, through the orators of the Fox school, at seeing her interests sacrificed on the continent to the cause of those kings who were paid by her subsidies, gave room to hope for an abatement of her hatred against Napoleon, now cured of many errors on returning from the harsh lesson of exile. These considerations, sincerely or artfully offered to public opinion by Napoleon's writers, and by the confidants of his hopes, lulled to sleep, at the commencement, the alarms excited by his return. The image of all Europe coalesced anew to annihilate this man, who came once more to defy it, in the bosom of a country exhausted of its strength, was so menacing, that people were glad to set it aside as one of those overwhelming calamities which the mind refuses to discuss, for fear of being crushed by it. Even Napoleon flattered himself against all hope, while those very hopes which he was obliged to affect in the eyes of the nation, to disguise from it the calamities which he was about to entail upon it, constrained him to a circumspection in his language and aspect towards Europe which rendered his situation equivocal. He would not afford a pretext for the aggression of the allied powers by too sudden armaments, much less by an offensive war; his nature and his policy were in contradiction with his attitude; and the man who owed all his victories to audacity, now found himself fettered by prudence. It was necessary to feign a belief in the impossibility of war, and to remain idle and motionless at a moment when there was the greatest need for rapid movement and desperate energy. Thus, to persuade France that she would not be forced into a war to support his cause, to

persuade Europe that he was become a pacific prince, and meanwhile to prepare himself for the assault of the world in silence, in secret, and by half measures, inadequate to the extremity of his peril; such was the doom of this absolute genius, whom a lucky but insane temerity had enmeshed in the net of his own ambition. Such also was the secret of his anxieties, his tergiversation, his tardiness, his councils without end, and of his weakness during these days of expectation, in which, while killing time, he consumed himself. He was no longer recognised at the Tuileries. France was astonished; for whilst every one expected miracles of resolution, of strength, and of activity, nothing was seen but hesitation, temporising, and uncertainty. The man failed the circumstances, because the circumstances failed the man; a terrible lesson for human pride; but the greatest men shrink into littleness when they have to cope with false positions. Cæsar was weak, irresolute and temporising at Rome, after having conquered his country by a crime; and the daggers which deprived him of life, delivered him also from an impossibility of deportment towards the senate and the people. Napoleon heaved back to the Empire, by the billows of a military sedition, was no longer the Napoleon of hope; he was the man of deception for the country and for himself.

II

The Congress of Vienna was still assembled, when Napoleon quitted the Isle of Elba; but on planting his foot upon the beach at Cannes, he exclaimed, "The Congress of Vienna is dissolved!" This was the expression of his hopes, "the wish was father to the thought;" he flattered himself that he had disconcerted Europe by the displacement of his person alone, and he wished that this exclamation, in flying before him on his route through France, should flatter the nation with the same hope. But this presage deceived him, as all auguries do which man draws from his own passions, instead of founding them on the reality of things. The interested correspondents he had at Vienna had persuaded him that the coalition was

embarrassed with its triumph, that the people were excited to indignation at the arbitrary partition and distribution of his spoils amongst the conquerors, that the courts, jealous of one another, could not agree in this great distribution of re-conquered territories, and that finally, his return to France, and re-establishment on his throne, would be the signal of a general panic amongst the sovereigns and their ministers, and would leave him the choice of alliances amongst so many enemies. He also flattered himself with the belief that M. de Talleyrand, a man who never struggled long against success, would be brought back to him again by victory, and would redeem by secret services at Vienna his defection at Paris. He therefore proposed to have him sounded as soon as he could send him a confidential negociator.

III.

Never since the constitution of Europe into nationalities, monarchies and republics, had a congress collected in any capital so imposing an assemblage of emperors, kings, generals and negociators; because Europe, profoundly deranged, conquered, divided and re-conquered, had never before had to effect so vast a re-construction of itself. More than 100,000 strangers, interested in, or spectators of the great discussions which were about to occupy the sovereigns, the diplomatists and the nations, had been flocking to Vienna from the month of September till the month of March. All the sovereigns of the north had repaired thither from Paris, after their armies had evacuated France. Their families, their ministers, their courts, their generals, had been invited by them to contemplate the triumph, receive the homage, and illustrate or embellish the fêtes of this victorious pacification of the west. Foremost amongst these was the Emperor Alexander, the young and modest Agamemnon of this court of kings; his Empress Elizabeth, a melancholy beauty, resembling the genius of solitude in the midst of grandeur; his brother, the Grand Duke Constantine, whose savage, but faithful rudeness displayed, even in his ugly features and brutal language, the

contrast of the Kalmuck with the natural elegance, graceful and flexible, of the Greek in Alexander. His principal councillors, M. de Nesselrode, M. de Stakelberg, M. Capo d'Istria, destined at a later period to perish in regenerating his country, Greece; and Pozzo di Borgo, at length avenged on an insular Corsican rivalship by the sword of Europe, accompanied the Emperor, directing and negociating for him. Then came the King of Prussia, still mourning the death of his beautiful queen, insulted by Napoleon, and who died of grief at the humiliation of Prussia; his two brothers, the princes William and Augustus of Prussia, the Prince of Hardenberg and the Baron de Humboldt, consummate statesmen of this court; the King of Denmark, son of the Queen Caroline Matilda, whose tragical misfortunes had caused such excitement in the north; the King of Bavaria, the King of Wurtemburg, the King of Saxony, adored by his subjects, and punished for his infidelity to Germany, and his devotion, more honourable than patriotic, to Napoleon; all the sovereign princes of the north and of Italy; the prime minister of Great Britain, Lord Castlereagh; the Duke of Wellington, and Blucher, destined, unknown to them, by fate, to give the final blow to the power of Napoleon, already once beat down, the Prince de Talleyrand, followed by a whole cabinet of French diplomatists, amongst whom were the Duke d'Alberg and the Count Alexis de Noailles; finally, the Emperor of Austria, who had retired to Schœnbrunn, the rural Versailles of Vienna, to give up the palaces and hotels of his capital to the emperors, the kings, the courts, the councils, the military staffs, and the guards of his royal guests. Prince Eugene Beauharnais, the only representative of the fallen grandeur of the family of Napoleon, had been authorised by the Emperor of Russia to follow him to Vienna. A stranger, and out of place, amidst this general assembly of sovereigns and generals, the conquerors of his cause and dynasty, Eugene Beauharnais cultivated the friendship of Alexander, who, on his side, courted popularity even in the friendship of his enemies. Every day they were seen in the streets and promenades of Vienna, chatting with the familiarity of two brothers in arms. This intimacy disturbed the other

sovereigns, as it might lead to Alexander's possible return to the cause of Bonaparte.

IV.

To preserve, amidst the fêtes and negociations for peace, the appearance and the luxury of camps, the sovereigns had retained around Vienna 20,000 select grenadiers of their different armies. A camp of 60,000 men was also formed to manœuvre under its walls. The guard of nobles of the Emperor of Austria, augmented by the volunteer cavalry of all the nobility of his military provinces, surrounded him with a martial splendour that Vienna had not witnessed since the war with the Turks, or since the immense gatherings of Wagram. The Emperor alone defrayed the expense of this enormous hospitality. The ministers and the great officers of his palace furnished splendid tables every day for these innumerable guests. All the theatrical companies of Germany, of Italy, and of France, had been summoned to Vienna to give select representations from their respective repertoires. All the great artists of Europe flocked thither to perpetuate by painting and sculpture the lineaments of the kings and their courts, and of the men and women, celebrated for their fame or their beauty, by whose presence they were graced. The old Prince de Ligne, formerly a witness of the fêtes of Catherine in the Crimea, a warrior, a statesman, a writer, a poet, a sort of Alcibiades of the west, presided over these festivities, grew young again in their excitement, and made them popular by his intellect, his verses, and the sallies of his lively wit. The palace of Vienna alone contained two emperors, two empresses, two hereditary princes, five sovereign princes, and several princesses. The imperial table was maintained at an expense of 100,000 francs per day; and the hospitality of the court of Vienna during the sitting of the congress cost 40,000,000 of francs. Seven hundred ministers, or envoys, of the different courts and nations of the globe participated in this reception of the Austrian monarchy, raised from so much abasement by so much good

fortune. The Prince de Metternich inspired his sovereign with a sovereign sway: he did not merely represent the absolute and steadfast confidence of the Emperor Francis II., but he also represented the aristocratical power of the Austrian states, the experienced practice of public affairs since his earliest youth, and the genius of diplomacy. The Empress Marie-Louise, re-conquered at Paris by the Emperor her father, had not yet gone to take possession of her states of Parma, which had been allotted to her in compensation for the loss of the Empire. Obliged by motives of propriety to absent herself from those fêtes occasioned by victories gained over her husband, she lived secluded, with her son the King of Rome, in a retired wing of the palace of Schœnbrunn. The dethroned Queen of Naples, Caroline, sister of Marie Antoinette, also lived in obscurity in the same asylum. She had come to claim from the congress that throne of Naples, still occupied by Murat, which she had scandalised by so many vices, contended for with so much firmness, and illustrated by turns with so much courage, and so many crimes. It was privately given back to her by the treaty between Austria, France, and England, when death snatched it from her for the last time. The usual mourning on this occasion was abridged, in order not to interrupt the luxury, the hunting, the banquets, the reviews, and the scenes of festivity which every night succeeded the labours of the day, consumed by the plenipotentiaries in long discussions. The princes, in order to cement their indissoluble friendship, mutually gave each other regiments of their guards to command; and in their riding parties they held the stirrup for each other by turns, as Frederick the Great had held that of Joseph II. Etiquette was nothing more than the assiduity of familiar friendship.

V

We have before detailed the political acts of the congress. With a prudence which their equilibrium rendered necessary, the princes had assumed as a basis the restoration, suitable to the constitutional ideas of the nation, of France, and for

Europe the restoration of the old reigning families, and of the ancient limits of states, with the slight modifications which the force of events, the decay of time, and the interests of the great powers appeared most naturally to admit of. Such, for instance, as the addition of Savoy to France, with which it had become naturalized in manners and language; the addition of Genoa to Piedmont, that of the Polish provinces, already detached by old partitions, to Prussia and Austria, and that of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw and the rest of Poland to Russia, as a separate and constitutional kingdom. England alone had not demanded any addition of territory, as an indemnity for the subsidies and the blood she had contributed towards the deliverance of the continent from the yoke of Napoleon. She wisely contented herself with the peace which opened the ocean to her mercantile navy, and assured to her the advantages of her unlimited commerce. This resolution of the congress to approach as nearly as possible to the *status quo ante bellum*, and to recognise, with a few exceptions, the right of old possession, and the legitimacy of transmitted sovereignty, had imparted to its labours, in spite of what has since been said on the subject, a character of simplicity, and of general morality which had facilitated, abridged, and done honour to its acts. Sweden left to Bernadotte, from respect to the free election of the Swedish people; Naples left to Murat, in recompense for his culpable neutrality and even his concurrence in the last war, were the principal exceptions to this universal rectification of sovereignties. A few murmurs only arose against the abolition of some petty powers, arbitrarily reduced, or swallowed up into some greater agglomerations. But it was evident that the days of petty powers, of subordinate nationalities, incapable of self-defence, and of municipal federations, without weight or action in the world, had gone by. Nationalities, even by the policy of Bonaparte, who had urged masses against masses, were tending, more and more, to constitute themselves into powerful individualities of race, of nation, and of government, in order to be able to resist by themselves the weight of national individualities already created on these large scales. This was

not a combination of European anarchy: it was an inspiration of peace, which can only be maintained by a balance of power. This has been proved by subsequent events: for internal revolutions in such states could not bring on a general war. When constitutions crumbled, and thrones disappeared in 1830 and in 1848, the general counterpoise remained the same as settled by the Congress of Vienna. The geographical immobility of Europe has prevailed amidst the oscillations of the European mind. M. de Talleyrand bore a considerable share in this work of the congress, although in appearance he only played there the part of the vanquished.

VI.

In recommending to the allied sovereigns at Paris, with a prompt and praiseworthy resolution, the principle of legitimacy, and interjecting the restoration of the Bourbons between France conquered and the princes victorious, Talleyrand had won their confidence and merited well at their hands. This brilliant deserter from the policy of Bonaparte to their cause had opened to them the access to Paris. The ability, by turns crafty and audacious, with which he had made public opinion in France glide from Napoleon to a provisional government, from a provisional government to a senate, from a senate to a national constitution, and from a national constitution to a royal charter and an unconditional proclamation of the Bourbons, assured him the gratitude of the sovereigns assembled at Vienna. The representative now of this ancient royal race, and of the principle of the inviolable legitimacy of thrones, upon which the princes themselves founded their security, M. de Talleyrand made common cause with them; and in the name of this common cause he was entitled to demand from them all the concessions necessary to the power and dignity of this restoration in his own country. He therefore treated with them no longer as the vanquished, but on a footing of equality. He had passed with his principle into the camp of venerable sovereignties, and they were obliged to accept him as a principal interested in a council of kings

deliberating about him, but with him. He was not slow in assuming there that superiority which nature gave him in all places where mental precision and subtlety of wit are held to be of any value.

VII.

Far from exhibiting embarrassment of demeanour in presence of the negociators of Europe triumphant, "I bring you," he had said, "more than you imagine of an immutable right. You have only power, but I am a principle, the legitimacy of crowns, the sacredness of crowns, the inviolability of traditions in thrones." Penetrating with a glance the mental reservations of the sovereigns who composed the coalition, with a view to overreach one another, but who would mutually have to watch each other with disquietude after having done so, M. de Talleyrand had divined that the immense ascendancy of Russia would not be long before pressing upon Austria in Germany, and upon England in the east. He had immediately magnified these suspicions, and laying them before England and Austria he had secured the concurrence of M. de Metternich and of Lord Castlereagh, in all questions in which Russia might be pressing too hard upon France. Thus the Emperor Alexander had served his purpose at Paris to press upon the Emperor of Austria, against the regency of Marie-Louise, and the acknowledgment of the King of Rome, while at Vienna the Emperor of Austria and England, served to press upon the Emperor Alexander to counteract the favour which this prince evinced for the adherents of Napoleon. Irritated, but too late, at this double part, and at the ascendancy of M. de Talleyrand, Alexander was astonished at an attitude which he himself had allowed the prime minister of Louis XVIII. to take a few months before. "Talleyrand," said he, "plays the part here of the minister of Louis XIV."

VIII.

At this period M. de Talleyrand had reached that age when the mind, inured to the transaction of weighty affairs,

still possesses all its vigour, and when years bestow upon man all their authority and past experience. He had attained his sixty-second year, and bore his age lightly, his name proudly. The disdain, without superciliousness, which he showed for the prejudices of the vulgar, prevented him from blushing at the contradictions which public opinion might note or stigmatise in his acts. He made a show of the past with much assurance, to deprive others of the temptation of reproaching him with it. He took the attitude of a man who does not give himself up to any government entirely to be honoured and aggrandized by it, but who honours and makes great whatever government he consents to serve, and ruins when he abandons it. A reflection of the grandeur and absolute power of the Empire still shone upon him, and it might be thought that in him was seen by turns the good and evil genius of Napoleon. These men from the north and south assembled at the Congress of Vienna in his presence, looked with respect upon this remnant of an empire in ruins, taking precedence of and giving counsel to ancient monarchies. The unconcern of his demeanour, the freedom of his mind, the ease of his manner in transacting the weightiest affairs, the attraction of his countenance, the simplicity veiling the subtlety, the grace of his bearing, the deep meaning of his words, the frequent silence creating the desire to hear him speak, the almost regal elegance of his life, the taste for art, the exquisite literature, the splendid saloons, the prodigal luxury, the magnificent house, the unrivalled table, the autocracy of fashion, gave to the representative of France the authority of infatuation with nations amongst whom reigned the spirit and imitation of the French. All this contributed at Vienna to make of M. de Talleyrand the arbiter, at once, of politics and elegance.

Prime minister and ambassador at the same time, he had chalked out to himself his own intentions, which were submitted to Louis XVIII. before he quitted Paris. This prince loved him but little, but he feared him. The man who has given a crown to his master is an importunate servant. But although the heart of Louis XVIII. was prejudiced at an early period against M. de Talleyrand, the mind of the King

and that of the minister understood and admired each other involuntarily in the midst of their susceptibility and distrust. They were of the same nature, and almost of the same stamp of mind; both one and the other deeply imbued with the aristocratical spirit, though with the revolutionary indulgence, and the philosophical complicity of the eighteenth century; both masking with ease and grace a powerful selfishness, both seeking to please, but in order to domineer. Both were lettered men, proud of understanding each other above the vulgar herd, but fearing each other at close quarters; the King, lest he should be obscured by the wit of the minister, and the minister, lest he should be humbled by the authority of the King

At a distance these two rivalships clashed less. A mutual desire of pleasing and surprising each other made their correspondence assiduous, familiar, and anecdotical. The King loved writing, because he excelled in those light and concise letters, where wit appears in glimpses, but shuns the eye of scrutiny. M de Talleyrand lent himself with studied complaisance to the King's taste. As idle with the hand as he was active in his mind, having laid down a rule never to write his own despatches, that he might be a better judge of the work of another hand, he left his secretaries and confidants, above all M. de Besnadiere, to draw up all the official documents, and all the correspondence with the ministers at Paris. He reserved to himself the confidential letters to the King, which were full of portraits, of characters, and of anecdotes of the princes and plenipotentiaries of the congress; a secret journal of all the courts of Europe, wherein the private life of the sovereigns held a more prominent place than the negociations. Louis XVIII. thus witnessed, through the eyes and understanding of one of the most intelligent and most penetrating men in Europe, the acts, the intrigues, the pleasures, and even the amours of this assembly of kings.

IX.

The deposition of Murat from the throne of Naples was more and more the subject of this political correspondence

between M. de Talleyrand and the cabinet of the Tuileries. The King Ferdinand of Bourbon, exiled on the throne of Sicily, had sent negociators to the congress to claim his kingdom: Murat, on his side, maintained there the Prince Curiati, the Duke of Campo-Chioso, the Duke of Rocca Romana, and General Filangieri, to watch the negociators of Ferdinand, and to remind the congress of the pledges he had given to the coalition, and the recompense he had been promised. But the presence of an upstart king, the offspring of conquest, and placed by the hand of Napoleon on the throne of a legitimate monarch, contrasted too strongly with the principle of legitimacy, with the interests of Austria, and with the pride of the house of Bourbon, in France and in Spain, to leave a serious hope to the negociators of Murat. The last hour of this prince had, in fact, stuck in the hearts of a majority of the powers, and the execution of the sentence was only retarded by the fear of a protest from the Emperor Alexander. The dissolution of the congress was only waited for, to allow France and England to accomplish the dethronement of Murat. These distinct negociations between rival powers, the contestations on the dismemberment of Saxony, those on the transfer of Poland to Alexander, and the armaments which were kept up, or being increased by Russia, by Austria, and by Prussia, created feelings of uneasiness, while a secret apprehension began to be felt that separate wars might still arise out of this congress assembled for the general peace. M. de Talleyrand alone was not alarmed at these symptoms, since he had bound up France, England, and Austria in one common interest. Every division of Europe was favourable to France, formerly proscribed by the unanimity of the continent.

People also began to occupy themselves about the disquietude which the too near vicinity of Napoleon's place of exile was occasioning in France, and to seek in distant seas another abode to assign him; but the differences relating to Naples, to Saxony, and to Poland had distracted the thoughts of the sovereigns and their ministers from the Isle of Elba, and nothing was determined upon.

X.

Such was the situation of the congress when about to terminate and dissolve, and perhaps to go to war again, when one night a courier from Leghorn brought to Lord Castlereagh the first announcement of the embarkation of Napoleon at Elba on board of three small vessels. They were still ignorant at Leghorn towards what coast he might direct his flag, but it was generally supposed he would make a descent in Italy or the east.

The Prince de Talleyrand was still ignorant of all this, when he arose the following morning. In imitation of monarchs, the etiquette of whose levees he affected, he was making his toilette for the day amidst a circle of his intimates and secretaries, when his niece, the young and beautiful Princess de Courlande, the favourite and ornament of his house, ran in, in a state of agitation, and handed him a note, marked secret and in haste, from the Prince de Metternich. M. de Talleyrand, whose hands were bedewed with the perfumes which his *valets-de-chambre* had poured upon them, and whose head was in possession of two artists who were curling and powdering his hair, begged his niece to open and read the note herself. She did so, and turning pale, "Heavens!" she exclaimed, more annoyed at the interruption of the fêtes of Europe where her beauty shone triumphantly, than at the crumbling of empires. "Heavens! Bonaparte has quitted Elba! What's to become of my ball this evening?"

M. de Talleyrand, with that impassibility which is the æquanimity of the soul adequate to the magnitude of events, uttered no exclamation of surprise, and exhibited no disturbance either in his look, his smile, or his gesture; but with that slow gravity of tone which constituted half his fascination: "Don't be uneasy, niece," he said to the young lady, "your ball shall take place." He saw at a glance that Napoleon had mistaken his time, that he had yielded more to his impatience of exile than to the fitness of circumstances, and that Europe, defied in the fulness of its power and the pride of its triumph,

would not a second time by its divisions give him the continent to subjugate. M. de Talleyrand did not hurry a single toilette detail of the daily ceremony of his levee; but while the sovereigns, the ministers, the courts, and the city were all talking with terror or disdain of those vessels which bore, no one knew whither, the enigma of the destiny of Europe, he shut himself up with M. de Metternich and Lord Castlereagh, for a portion of the day, and made himself acquainted with the private opinions of these two powers. He had no difficulty in proving to a political genius so thoroughly trained as that of Prince Metternich, that to give time to such a man as Napoleon was to give him once more all Europe and its thrones, and that to listen to a single proposition from him was a virtual abdication for all the sovereigns. He wrote that evening to Louis XVIII. advising him to distrust the army, to reckon little upon France, to contend for without lacerating it, but not to doubt the assistance of his allies. He knew by disclosures made at Vienna that a military conspiracy was brewing at Paris and at Naples; that Hortensia Beauharnais held the strings of it; that her brother, Eugene Beauharnais, had become acquainted, by some imprudent disclosures of the Emperor Alexander, with the vague projects of removing Napoleon from the continent by banishing him to some distant ocean; that Eugene had acquainted Napoleon with this menace; that the ground was undermined in France beneath the Bourbons, by men devoted, either through interest, regret, or hope, to the Empire; that Madame de Krüdner, an enthusiastic and mystical woman, a sort of northern St. Theresa, who had fascinated the tender and superstitious soul of Alexander, had loudly foretold the return of Napoleon to Hortense, at a meeting of these two ladies at the Baths of Baden. There was nothing, he said to the King, to be mistrusted, or to be watched over, except the partiality of the young Emperor of Russia for the family of Napoleon, to which he displayed a generosity in opposition with his character of sovereign, and which went even to the extent of bias against the Bourbons. Nevertheless, the sound judgment of M. de Nesselrode and the hatred of M. Pozzo di Borgo, influential

in his councils, ought to tranquillize the King upon the subject of his resolutions. Being sure of M. de Metternich, of England, and of Prussia, insulted in its queen and its glory, M. de Talleyrand thought he could answer for the congress to the King.

XI.

Five days full of mysteries and conjectures passed at Vienna, without the arrival of any news from the Mediterranean, or the coast of Italy, to clear up the doubts that prevailed as to the destination of the flotilla, which bore the invisible destiny of Europe; and people began to feel re-assured by this silence. They began to think that the east must have attracted the adventurous imagination of Napoleon in his decline, as it had attracted him in his youth: a country of dreams, where all that one imagines may assume a shape on shores which have seen all. These five days were, however, employed by M. de Talleyrand in operating through his friends on the mind of the Emperor Alexander, and in making him look upon the return of his vanquished enemy as an insolent defiance of his glory, and a falsification of that peace, and that reconstruction of the continent and its thrones, of which providence had made him the most glorious instrument. The Emperor Alexander, justly indignant at the suspicions of connivance, or of weakness, which France, Austria, Prussia, and England might cast upon his fidelity, instantly broke off all communication with Eugene Beauharnais, suspected of having abused his friendship to betray the resolutions of congress. This prince, innocent of all treachery, but who was attached to Napoleon by gratitude and community of fortune, quitted Vienna to retire to the territories of his wife's father. He remained neuter between Europe and the man who had acted towards him as a parent, and sufficiently evinced by this reserve that he was doubtless friendly to, but not an accomplice in, this attempt against Europe.

XII.

The fêtes, for a moment suspended, had diffused through Vienna the apparent serenity, the luxury, and the splendour of a peaceful capital. It was expected that the next intelligence from Genoa or Trieste would bring the news of the landing of this handful of adventurers in some island of the Archipelago, in Greece, in Syria, or in Egypt. The audacity of a descent in Europe was rejected by all as incredible, except by M. de Talleyrand; and it was in the midst of a ball at the palace of Prince Metternich that the news of Napoleon's debarkation first broke upon the public of Vienna. Letters from the south related the first steps of Napoleon on an undisputed soil, the astonishment, or the complicity of the troops, the indecision of the populace, the triumphal march through one half of the Empire, the defection of Labédoyère, the fall of Grenoble and of Lyons, the doubtful immobility of Marshal Ney, the army increasing from division to division, Paris threatened, the insurrection of Drouet d'Erlon, and Lefevre Desnouettes in the north, the indignation and stupor of the capital, the government in confusion, the chambers powerless, the King firm, but retained in his palace as in a snare, reduced to capitulate or to fly before the sedition of his own soldiers. Terror and consternation were depicted upon every countenance; war and its horrors might be read in every look. The females broke into lamentations, the men formed groups to communicate their conjectures to each other; all eyes were directed towards the sovereigns, to read the decrees of fate in their features. The Emperor Alexander seemed to be the most irritated; he advanced towards M. de Talleyrand, as if to reproach him with the faults of his masters, whose partiality towards the emigrants had, according to this sovereign, rendered France disaffected and prepared for the attempt of Napoleon. "I told you truly," said Alexander, "that it would not last!" M. de Talleyrand, not desirous of contesting or avowing the justice of the reproach, bowed without reply, as one who admits a painful truth. The King of Prussia made a sign to

the Duke of Wellington to retire with him, that he might concert his preparations with the generalissimo of England, his most intimate ally. The Duke crossed the hall, followed the King, and quitted with him the hotel of Prince Metternich, the first step, as it may be considered, to Waterloo. The Emperor of Austria and Prince Metternich, the entertainers of the day, retired very soon from the suspended fête, and followed the King of Prussia and the Emperor Alexander; the night was concluded in secret councils, which were resumed on the following morning.

XIII.

These first councils of the sovereigns amongst themselves were agitated and stern. They reproached one another (convinced now by the force of a truth which menaced them all), with their tardiness and their divisions after the conquest of Paris; their weakness in not pursuing even in captivity the agitator of the world, whom Providence had delivered into their hands at Fontainebleau; their want of vigour towards the parties which they had left armed and struggling with the Bourbons; their consideration towards the French army in not requiring it to be disbanded, and towards France in not disarming and exhausting it by taxation. "Your Majesty sees," exclaimed the Emperor of Austria to the Emperor Alexander, "what you have gained by having protected the liberals and the Bonapartists of Paris!" "It is true," replied the Czar, humbling himself for his fault; "but to repair my errors, I place myself, my empire, and my army at your Majesty's service!" The anger of the sovereigns and their ministers against Napoleon turned into resentment against France herself, the accomplice, either through connivance or servility, of Bonaparte. So long as this focus of war and revolution should exist, there could be no durable peace for the nations, no security for crowns. A European war of extermination against France, which had executed Louis XVI., and twice crowned Napoleon, was the first cry of the sovereigns and their councils. Its immediate conquest, before the nation should have time to furnish new

armies to Bonaparte, its partition afterwards, that the members of this great body should never again be able to join to upheave the weight of the whole world; these were the resolutions uttered in an undertone. The Bourbons had not learnt how to reign: it was therefore necessary to abandon them to their evil destiny, and to destroy an empire of which they could not guarantee the internal obedience, or limit the foreign ambition. These thoughts, ill repressed, embittered by irritation, fomented by the hatred of the aristocracies, and by the ambition of the neighbouring sovereigns, lay smouldering for some days amongst the coteries of the allied powers. The position of M. de Talleyrand was lowered; he no longer represented anything but a powerless monarchy, and a nation dreaded by the rest of the world. A negociator less firm and less consummate would have sunk; but he roused himself to the magnitude of the crisis, and struggled during eight days in the conferences, with a desperate constancy, which disconcerted the enemies of France and of the Bourbons, afforded time for a return of more prudent counsels, and which saved France and the Restoration from universal hatred. These struggles of one man against fortune and against Europe, were long, unequal, inveterate, and frequently unsuccessful.

XIV.

"No, no," said Alexander to his confidants, "I am weary of war; I cannot employ the whole period of my reign, and the forces of my empire, in raising up in France, a family which knows neither how to fight or to reign. Let them settle their affairs with their neighbours and amongst themselves: I shall never draw the sword for them again." Thus, on one side, discouragement and neutrality from Russia, retiring with contempt from the struggle, to let fortune alone decide between France and the neighbouring powers; on the other, a declaration of war to the knife, and spoliation of the soil after victory: such was the alternative which the anger of some, the indifference of others, and the indecision of all, left to M. de Talleyrand. But he faced this coalition of disdain,

of reproaches, of the desertion of all these courts, with a constancy of heart, of countenance, and of language, which showed his genius to be equal to the difficulties he had to contend with. M. de Talleyrand has been much calumniated by history on every side: by the men of the Restoration, because he had deserted the aristocracy and the church; by the men of the Empire, because he had foreseen the fall, and repudiated the ruin of Napoleon; by all, because he had not linked himself to any government as a slave of the palace, but had judged them whilst serving them, and quitted when in serving them these governments could no longer serve him. This judgment is correct; it testifies in the character of M. de Talleyrand, as a statesman, as much inferiority of devotion as superiority of mind. We say as a statesman, for no one was more faithful, or even more generous in his friendships. His private and domestic intercourse was as much to be depended upon as his political intercourse was subject to inconstancy and the vicissitude of events. But through the oscillations of his public career, he had always two fixed points, round which his long life gravitated: the sentiment of his country to be saved, and the sentiment of the peace of the world to maintain, or to re-establish, by an equilibrium, which France and England, united by superior civilization, should always jointly hold the power to preserve. At the three great epochs of his life these fixed thoughts displayed themselves with great consistency in the memorable transactions of his time. In 1790, when he united with Mirabeau, to transform the monarchy, and to level the church, without breaking with Great Britain, and without yielding the victory in the anarchical war with the Jacobins; at the Congress of Vienna, when he alone restrained Europe from making France responsible for the defiance of Napoleon; and finally, in 1830, when he negociated at the conferences of London, the compromise between Europe and France respecting Belgium, when he compelled, by his firmness and by his wisdom, the revolution to moderate itself, and Europe to resign itself to peace. It may be asserted that at the revolution of 1848, had he been alive at this still more extreme and convulsive crisis, M. de Talleyrand

would have evinced the same genius in avoiding war, sometimes glorious for France, but ever fatal to democracy. The week which followed at Vienna the news of Bonaparte's invasion was made an age by him through his activity and its results.

XV.

Nature had not made an orator of Talleyrand; he had neither the fire of eloquence, nor the powerful voice which propagate the statesman's opinions abroad, and which carry away while they conquer the conviction and the passions, the reason and the minds of men, persuaded or subdued by the force of language. The power of his mind was in meditation, his influence in sagacity; and he gained the opinions of men, in conversation or in council, through their interest, and not through their enthusiasm. A profound investigator and a skilful corrupter of the human heart, he won over to his side the feelings, or the selfishness of those whom he wished to convince. His eloquence was not in his mouth but in the souls of his auditors: the secret instincts of each, well scrutinised and laid bare to his view, were the accomplices of his attack. He did not persuade you to what you were not already convinced of, but his art was to display you to yourself, and to make you think that more was meant than met the ear. This was the reason that the slightest words, short reflections, and veiled insinuations were sufficient for him; he tore asunder a corner of the curtain which concealed the depth of things; and directing the eyes of people therein, he left them to reflect upon what they saw with apparent pleasure; silence and reflection did the rest in his favour. This description of eloquence which supposes a precision of mind, and a penetration of instinct almost equal to genius, was suited above all to an audience of kings and of ministers, in a question wherein every ambition and every rivalship had an open ear and a wakeful pride. It was also suited to an assembly where all should be made to think, but where everything should not be spoken. The habit of associating with kings, with courts, and with high

aristocracies, in the midst of, and on an equality with which M. de Talleyrand had passed his life, imparted to him at once the respect and the freedom which such high discussions imposed upon the negociators of France. Occupied all the day in seeing separately the princes and the ministers whose favourable opinion he wished to gain by considerations drawn from their peculiar interest, and present in the evening at the conferences, M. do Talleyrand made M. de la Besnadiere work all night at the notes, which he revised himself in the morning and presented officially to the several cabinets. As clever as Mirabeau in making others think for him while he was acting, and in grouping the powers of different minds, he imparted his ideas in a few words to his seconds, whom he required to carry them into effect. From these he received them elaborated, and stored them in his memory to make use of afterwards in the discussions. The persons before whom he spoke, M. de Metternich, Lord Castlereagh, Lord Wellington, M. de Nesselrode, Capo d'Istria, M. de Hardenberg, the Emperor Alexander himself, were all equal to the appreciation of his vast intelligence. All these consummate statesmen understood the language of affairs of state; the auditors were worthy of such questions, and they were further prepared by a per. sonal fascination to listen to the negociator. M. de Talleyrand knew how to please as well as to overawe; everything, even to his former life, was persuasive in him. He had exhibited, it is true, great complaisance, unpardonable in the eyes of some, towards the French revolution and the universal monarchy of Napoleon; but was not so distinguished a deserter the most capable to enlighten the sovereigns and their courts on the dangers of the enemy's camp, of which nobody better knew the opinions, the power, and the weakness? And then, was he not a revolutionist converted, and an accomplice thenceforth irreconcilable with Napoleon betrayed or disavowed? Finally, was he not a member of that European aristocracy, bearing as a pledge of his sincerity the souvenirs and the pride of his name to that Areopagus of monarchies and aristocracies? His nature, his birth, his life, his manners, even his faults, but above all, the superiority of his understanding, therefore

constituted M. de Talleyrand the first of men acting the highest part in this supreme crisis of the congress. Regardless of some overtures from Bonaparte which had reached him, but which he was too clever to confide in, M. de Talleyrand felt that in these conferences he was playing for not only the fate of France and of the Bourbons, but for his own fortune, his exile, and perhaps his head. Would not the vengeance of Napoleon, should he conquer, pursue him everywhere? These great personal interests still further excited the political interest of his negociation. He had placed the Bourbons upon the throne by the hand of Europe, but he had done nothing if he did not maintain them there.

In spite of his efforts, however, the courts hesitated. He went on persuading, but he did not win over: the indignation which the news brought by every courier of Napoleon's triumphs and the apparent versatility of France excited, destroyed every day the progress he had made the preceding evening. The generals, above all, more indignant than the plenipotentiaries, were opposed to any other policy than a prompt invasion, and a final subjugation of a people so incapable of peace The sovereigns, carried away by the popularity of the war with their armies, full of the recollections of former triumphs, could not resist these desires for vengeance on the part of Germany and Russia. All the draughts of declarations presented one after another by M. de Talleyrand, in favour of the Bourbons, had been laid aside, or postponed; projects of an opposite nature appearing to command a majority in the conferences. Days were passed in this manner; but Europe could not be kept mute and thrones undecided much longer; silence would appear to be irresolution, and irresolution weakness or division. Napoleon was on the point of seizing upon the throne, and the 13th March was, therefore, fixed on for the eventful conclusion of the conferences, and the adoption of a declaration of some description or other.

XVI.

M. de Talleyrand employed the night of the 12th March in preparing the declaration which he wished the sovereigns to

sign, though he was almost discouraged by the inutility of the efforts he had previously made to force it from Europe. On leaving his hotel to go to the palace of the congress, he said to M. de la Besnadiere, his secretary, and to his niece, who were with him, and who knew the anxieties which precede a moment of such vital consequence in the life of a statesman, "I leave you in despair; I am going to make the last efforts; if I fail, France is lost: and the Bourbons and I will not have even the remnant of a country for exile. I see your impatience to know what will be our fate in a few hours. Nothing is allowed to transpire out of the hall of conference, and I cannot therefore send you any message during the day; but be at the windows that you may learn the result a few minutes before my arrival. Look out for my carriage at the hour when I shall return a conqueror or conquered. If I have failed, I shall keep myself shut up and motionless; but if I have carried a favourable declaration, I shall wave in my hand, out of the carriage window, a paper which will contain our triumph; some minutes less of anxiety will thus weigh upon your spirits." He then departed.

XVII.

The sitting commenced in the morning, and was prolonged till the middle of the day, with doubtful success and general dispositions which seemed to forebode a declaration hostile to Louis XVIII. and to his negociator. M. de Talleyrand summoning his full powers of intelligence and persuasion, and availing himself, above all, of that manly frankness, the supreme ability of men who do not wish to deceive but to convince, overstepped the habitual sobriety of his language, and launched out slowly and solemnly in powerful considerations, like one who is uttering his last words to destiny, and who does not wish to repent one day or another of not having said everything. "I can comprehend," said he, in his lowest but most penetrating tone of voice, "the indignation of the allied powers, of their ministers, and of their armies, against the man who has broken the ban of the world, and against the French nation and its government, which seem to have given him for the second

time the throne we expelled him from; but is the fault of this return entirely to be attributed to the Bourbons and to us?" (At these words he looked significantly at the plenipotentiaries of Alexander). "Was it the Bourbons, was it France, was it we who signed the treaty of Fontainebleau? Was it the Bourbons, was it France, was it we who allotted this exile of all Europe so dangerous a place of banishment, more dangerous, perhaps, than an empire; for it must have been a perpetual opportunity for him to threaten them all? Was it we who placed him within sight of our coasts, and of the coasts of your Italy; and who furnished him with the nucleus of an army, in order that he might incessantly offer from thence that image and that fascination of glory and fidelity to the rest of the army, to seduce and draw it over to himself at the moment it might be most convenient for him to choose? Is it we who declared his independence at Elba, and who of a captive made a sovereign? Is it we who left him millions of money and arms, the certain elements of a perpetual conspiracy? Is it we who tied up the hands of the princes of the house of Bourbon, and who, by pressing with all the weight of Europe on their councils at Paris last year, laid down to them the law of toleration towards the members of the imperial family, of which they are now reaping the reward? Is it we who have caressed, even here, the born and natural accomplices of Napoleon, and thus persuaded the army that their former chief had allies or friends amongst the assembled sovereigns? No; be just. These faults cannot be ascribed either to France or to the Bourbons, upon whom you now would throw the burthen. These faults, you confess it yourselves, are the result of your own magnanimity and of your own imprudence. It was impossible that a country thus offered as a temptation and a prey to an ambitious military party, having a chief in freedom at hand a few hours' sail from the coast, should not, sooner or later, have to endure an attempt upon its throne and its liberties. We are far from accusing this greatness of soul which has treated a vanquished person almost like a conqueror; but at least let us not be accused of generous imprudences which we could only admire but not prevent, and of which we are now the victims."

Alexander and his councillors appeared to acquiesce by their silence in the justice of these observations, while the Austrian, English, and Prussian plenipotentiaries secretly enjoyed the reproaches which they themselves had before made against Alexander's partiality for Napoleon. This modest and conscientious prince felt his rrors, and only asked to repair them by fighting again on the side of Europe; but M. de Talleyrand wished that in doing so he should separate France and the Bourbons from Napoleon; and that in giving his sanction to a second campaign against the Emperor, he should refuse it to the dethronement of Louis XVIII. and the partition of France; he therefore returned to the charge afresh on this important point of the question.

XVIII

"Wherein lies the error of the house of Bourbon," said he, "in this calamity which weighs, above all the world, upon itself? Has it not followed your counsels? Has it not given an amnesty to the Empire? Has it not made a diversion from the spirit of conquest, by the spirit of liberty infused into the charter, of which you yourselves gave the inspiration? Has it not loaded with confidence and dignities the lieutenants of Napoleon? Has it not done everything to gain the attachment of that army which had fought against it in fighting against you? Did it depend upon the King to change in a day, the spirit of that army accustomed to another master, to extirpate its souvenirs, and to stifle its fanaticism for a man who had mingled his name with its own? Did that depend even upon the nation, disarmed and surprised by a general defection of its troops? Do you not yourselves know what an unarmed people is against an organized body of troops? National insurrections against military governments require time, but for armed insurrections an hour is enough. Bonaparte has been a thunderbolt to France; will you punish a people for the blow that has struck them, and which no human force could ward off in twelve days? If you punish France by dividing it after its conquest, how will you agree together in the distribution of the spoils? And what

power can ever restrain under its hand, the members still living, still convulsive, ever on the stretch to rejoin one another, of a nation formed by ages, and which will shake, not only itself, but your own states that it may have been incorporated with. You had nothing to dread in France but the revolutionary spirit, but you will then have to restrain and to combat at the same time the two least compressible forces in the political world, the revolutionary spirit and the spirit of independence. This double volcano will open its craters even under your own hereditary possessions. Look at Poland! Is it not the spirit of independence which perpetually nourishes there the spirit of revolution? The revolution was enclosed within the circuit of France, but you will have spread it all over Europe. The partition of France, were it possible, would be the ruin of the continent."

The statesmen who listened to these words were sufficiently enlightened to comprehend them

XIX.

"But, I am told here every day," resumed M. de Talleyrand, "that the question is, not to ruin France but to weaken it so that it shall not be hurtful to other nations; to exhaust its strength, to occupy it indefinitively, and to give it for its masters, sovereigns with a firmer hand, and a name less unpopular than that of Bourbon! Now, I would ask of those men who have, like me, had an opportunity of knowing Louis XVIII., if Providence has often bestowed upon the family of kings, and on the difficult government of nations, a prince more mature in years, more practised in revolutions, more imbued with the spirit of his time, more impressed with the innate sentiment of royalty, and, at the same time, more expert in making that royalty bend to the opinions and the necessities of an untractable people, than the King of France? Who then, except the usurper of this throne, would dare to occupy it after him? France can only be governed by the sword or by right; you will break the sword, but where will be the right if you remove the house of Bourbon? And if you cease to recognise this right of the legitimacy of kings in France, what becomes of your own in

Europe? What becomes of this principle, or rather this religion of legitimacy, which we have found again under the ruins of twenty years' revolutions, of subversions, of conquests; and which is become the basis of nations, the foundation of thrones, the inviolability of the kingly power? How shall a nation, already disconcerted by so many vicissitudes in its capital, recover that faith which you yourselves will have taught them to despise? Had the house of Bourbon become superannuated, and did it offer at this moment only enervated sovereigns to fill the throne, Europe would still be condemned to crown them or to perish; for the cause of Europe is the cause of legitimacy, and legitimacy is synonymous with the house of Bourbon! It owes to you its re-establishment on the throne of France, you owe to it the moral security of all thrones. But the house of Bourbon has not become superannuated; it possesses a sage in Louis XVIII. competent to grapple with the difficulties of a restoration, and nature will give it princes to perpetuate itself in the descendants of Henri IV. What would the world say if Europe, armed against the revolution, should dethrone with its own hand, the race which the revolution has immolated, and thereby justify regicide and the republic?

XX.

"No; two things are impossible to Europe, represented by the power and the wisdom of its hereditary chiefs, assembled here to dictate to the world their will and its destiny: the partition of France and the dethronement of the Bourbons; the one a crime against nations, the other against thrones. What, therefore, is possible? That which is wise and just. To separate, in the first place, the cause of the French nation from that of the usurper, to declare personal and exclusive war against Bonaparte, and peace to France; thus to weaken Bonaparte by showing him alone to be the only obstacle to the reconciliation of nations, and to disarm France by not confounding its cause with the cause of its oppressor! In the second place, to declare that on the throne, in the provinces, or even in exile, Europe would only recognise the sovereignty in the King, and in the house of Bourbon!"

These considerations developed powerfully and at length, carried conviction by the force of evidence. The declaration prepared by M. de Talleyrand, drawn up and slightly amended by the plenipotentiaries, was signed unanimously by the sovereigns and their ministers. That declaration announced to France and to Europe, that—

"The sovereigns who signed the treaty of Paris, assembled in congress at Vienna, informed of the escape of Napoleon Bonaparte, and of his entrance by force of arms into France, owe to their own dignity, and to the interest of social order, a solemn declaration of the sentiments which this event has excited in their breasts.

"In thus breaking the convention which had established him at the Isle of Elba, Bonaparte has destroyed the only legal title to which his existence was attached. By reappearing in France, with projects of disturbance and subversion, he has deprived himself of the protection of the laws, and has manifested in the face of the universe, that peace or truce can no longer be maintained with him.

"The sovereigns declare, in consequence, that Napoleon Bonaparte has placed himself out of the pale of civil and social relations; and that, as an enemy and a disturber of the peace of the world, he has given himself up to public vengeance.

"They declare, at the same time, that they will employ every means, and unite all their efforts to guarantee Europe from every attempt which might threaten to replunge the nations in the disorders and calamities of revolutions.

"And although firmly persuaded that the whole of France, rallying around its legitimate sovereign, will immediately extinguish this last attempt of a powerless and criminal agitation, all the sovereigns of Europe, animated by the same sentiments, and guided by the same principles, declare, that if, contrary to all calculation, any danger whatever should result from this event, they will be ready to give to the King of France and to the French nation, or to any other government attacked, as soon as the demand shall be made, the assistance necessary to re-establish public tranquillity, and to make common cause against all those who would attempt to compromise it.

"Vienna, the 13th March, 1815."

XXI.

M. de Talleyrand quitted the conference in triumph, waving in his hand, as he approached his hotel, the signal of victory to the eager eyes of his associates.

The hesitation which had hitherto suspended the measures of the sovereigns and their ministers, now changed to a formidable activity of preparations. It was only necessary to order the armies to countermarch, the different corps being still organized and under arms. The sovereigns, jointly and severally, signed a treaty offensive and defensive against the usurper of the throne of France. Austria contributed to the war 350,000 men, under the command of the generalissimo, Prince Schwartzenberg, who had commanded its armies in the preceding campaign. England and Prussia united, contributed 250,000 men, forming two distinct armies, but operating in concert, one under Blucher, the other under Wellington; and Alexander 200,000 men, commanded by the Emperor himself. The Spanish, Swedish, and Italian auxiliary troops raised this formidable armament to nearly 1,000,000 of men, inured to war, flushed with conquest, under the command of chiefs who must have derived confidence and courage from their last victories, and who were thus going to resume their march on France, recalled thither by the temerity of a single man, and still uncertain of the fate of Louis XVIII. whose departure from Paris only they were acquainted with. The allied sovereigns stipulated in the convention of war that the King of France should be the principal party of this coalition, the sole object of which was the defence of his throne guaranteed by Europe, and that he should join to the combined forces the French troops still faithful to his cause. M. de Talleyrand thus assigned the leading part to this prince, expelled from his capital, already wandering in a foreign country, and who, but the evening before, was threatened with the desertion and the disdain of the congress. M. de Talleyrand sent couriers to the King by different routes, to acquaint him with this triumph of his negociation, and it may be said, that he twice crowned his master; a dangerous part to play for a subject.

BOOK TWENTY-FIRST.

Exceptions of Lord Castlereagh to the Convention of War—Overture of Napoleon to the Austrian Ambassador—Queen Hortensia's attempt to gain over Alexander—Napoleon's Letter to the Allied Sovereigns—Caulaincourt's report to Napoleon—Reply of the Council of State to the Declaration of the Allies—Mission of M. de Montrond to M. de Talleyrand, and of Baron de Stassart to the Empress—Intrigues of Fouché with the Allies—Distrust of the Emperor—Interview between M. Fleury de Chaboulon and M. de Werner at Basle—Napoleon's suspicions of Davoust—Revolt of Murat in Italy—Retrospect of his Life—His Family and Infancy—His commencement in the Army—His Marriage—His success in Italy—His conduct in the affair of the Duke d'Enghien—His expedition to Spain—He becomes King of Naples—His Life and Character.

I.

The policy of the English government, compelled by the nature of its liberal institutions to answer for all its acts at the bar of the public opinion of a free people, had not permitted Lord Castlereagh, its minister at Vienna, to sign the treaty offensive and defensive in the same terms as Russia, Prussia, Austria and France had adopted. The outward respect of the British people for the independence of other nations, forbade its ministers to avow the formal intention of restoring the house of Bourbon to the throne of France. The ministers must be in a position to reply to parliament, when called upon there for information respecting the treaty, that the safety of England, the deliverance of the continent, and war against Napoleon, constituted the only objects of their armaments and their subsidies. These ministers, therefore, only gave their adhesion to the treaties and to the convention of war, in ambiguous terms, of which all understood the meaning,

though no one could impugn the text. They declared that they only joined the coalition to pursue the common war against the common enemy, but in no respect to impose any particular government upon France; a reservation which was necessary for their justification to the British parliament. By a singular turn of opinion, and by one of those inexplicable contradictions peculiar to all oppositions in a free country, a small but eloquent party in the House of Commons affected an impassioned partiality for Bonapartism. This party sacrificed its patriotism to that thirst for popularity at any cost, the besetting sin of orators, and sought this popularity even in the name of Napoleon, the enemy of their country. The English ministers, however, depending on the good sense of the majority, and the acquiescence of the nation at large, engaged to furnish a war subsidy of 125,000,000 of francs to the coalition, to pay a part of the troops

II.

While these resolutions were signing at Vienna, while the combined armies were receiving their orders to march, and the sovereigns were separating to join their respective armies, and re-assemble on the frontiers, Napoleon continued to flatter France, and to flatter himself, with hopes of the inaction of Europe, and the speedy rupture of the coalition. He neglected nothing to regain some shadow or pretext for negociation. His declarations to the people and to the allied powers were those of a peaceful prince, who is desirous of either re-assuring, or lulling his enemies. The combined armies were already advancing through Germany, and the English vessels were capturing his ships on both seas, but he still feigned not to hear these notes of war, and still redoubled his demonstrations of peace.

The prolonged residence at Paris of the Baron de Vincent, the Austrian ambassador at the court of Louis XVIII., gave some shadow of probability to the rumours spread by Napoleon, of his pretended secret relations with the Emperor Francis, and of the connivance of M. de Metternich in his return to

France. These rumours were nothing but police artifices; for the Baron de Vincent was only retained in Paris for want of passports to leave France. The Emperor, however, directed M. de Caulaincourt, his minister of foreign affairs, to seek an interview with this ambassador, but M. de Vincent declined all official intercourse with the minister of a government which he did not recognise. He consented, however, to converse with M. de Caulaincourt, at an accidental meeting at the residence of Madame de Souza, the wife of the Portuguese ambassador. Madame de Souza was a Frenchwoman, well known in the literary world by works of fiction, formerly connected with M. de Talleyrand, and the mother of M. de Flahaut, one of the most agreeable young officers of Napoleon, both in the court and the army. Of a natural disposition, similar to that of Madame de Genlis and Madame de Staël, she was equally disposed to be the instrument of political fortune for the men to whom she devoted her celebrity. She had long before offered to serve the diplomacy of Napoleon, for her heart and her ambition were both enlisted in his cause. Baron de Vincent was in no respect authorised to reply in the name of his sovereign to M. de Caulaincourt; he had no communication with Vienna, and could only express himself in conjectures. He was sufficiently acquainted, however, with the firm resolution of his court, never to expose Germany and Italy to a second reign of the conqueror of Milan and of Vienna, to assure the minister of foreign affairs that the Emperor of Austria would not treat with him. He was less explicit on the regency of Marie-Louise, a combination which might tempt Austria perhaps by the perspective of a minority of the King of Rome, swayed from Vienna by the ascendant of a father over his daughter and his grandson. He consented to take charge of a letter from Napoleon, for the Empress at Vienna; he then obtained his passports, departed for Vienna, and gave the letter to the Emperor Francis, who did not, however, communicate it to his daughter. Uneasy about the attempts which French agents, it was said, were meditating at Vienna, to carry off Marie-Louise and the King of Rome, and to take them to Paris, the Emperor Francis became alarmed for his daughter while at the

isolated residence of Schœnbrunn, and had her removed to his own palace at Vienna. This princess, whose return to Paris would complicate afresh the embarrassment of the coalition, dreaded as much as her father the attempts of Napoleon's agents against her and her son. Freedom in her own country, and a sovereignty in Italy, were dearer to her than slavery on the throne of France. Her heart was no longer Napoleon's; and her soul had never ceased to be German.

III.

Napoleon, repulsed in all his advances by the official agents of the allied powers, had recourse to secret agents to lay before them propositions which resembled excuses more than explanations. The Queen Hortensia Beauharnais, who was at the same time his daughter-in-law and his sister-in-law, and who was then in Germany, was commissioned by him to explore the heart of the Emperor Alexander, for that old friendship which he wished to invoke towards a reconciliation now so necessary. Queen Hortensia reckoned on the personal favour which the young sovereign of the north had evinced for her at Paris in 1814, but she was mistaken. "No peace; not even a truce with him," said Alexander. "Everything but Napoleon!" He also engaged in a similar attempt his brother Joseph, who for a moment had been King of Spain, and had since retired to the Chateau de Prangin, on the Lake of Geneva, where his activity and immense fortune had served, it is said, to multiply the intrigues between France and Elba; but Joseph had only silence in reply. At length the Emperor decided on speaking himself; and M. de Caulaincourt wrote under his dictation the following letter to each of the allied sovereigns, whose master Napoleon had been so long, and whose brother he still was ambitious of being:—

"Paris, April 4, 1815.

"Sir, my brother—You have learned in the course of last month my return to the shores of France, my entrance into Paris, and the retirement of the Bourbons. The true nature of these events must now be made known to your Majesty. They

are the work of an irresistible power, the result of the unanimous will of a great nation, which knows its duties and its rights. The dynasty which force had imposed upon the French people was no longer calculated for them; the Bourbons had no community with them, either of feeling or manners. France was therefore compelled to withdraw from them; its voice called on a liberator, for the experiment which had induced me to make so great a sacrifice had failed. I therefore returned, and from the spot where I first touched the soil of France the love of my people bore me to the bosom of my capital.

"The first wish of my heart, is to repay so much affection with an honourable tranquillity. The re-establishment of the imperial throne was necessary for the happiness of the French; and my most ardent hope is to render it at the same time the means of confirming the peace of Europe.

"Enough of glory has added lustre by turns to the flags of the different nations; the vicissitudes of fate have sufficiently caused a succession of great reverses and signal triumphs. A more noble arena is now opened to the sovereigns, and I shall be the first to enter it. After having presented the world with the spectacle of great battles, it will be sweeter to recognise hereafter, no other rivalship than that of prolonging the blessings of peace; no other struggle than the sacred one of perpetuating the happiness of nations.

"France takes a pride in proclaiming frankly this noble end of all her wishes. Jealous of her own independence, the invariable principle of her policy will be the most absolute respect for the independence of other nations. If such are, as I confidently believe, the personal sentiments of your Majesty, the general tranquillity is assured for a long period; and justice, seated at the confines of the different states, will alone suffice to guard the frontiers.

"NAPOLEON."

IV.

The frontiers, however, were so completely closed against all the messages of Napoleon, and Europe had so entirely

withdrawn from him all the official or officious agents of Paris, that the minister of foreign affairs could not succeed in forwarding one of these letters to any of the European courts. The Emperor, reduced to the conviction that his attempts at seduction or division upon the allied powers were vain, and that it would be more dignified for him to confess his isolation than to mask it for a few days longer, under feigned or ridiculous negociations, caused himself the following cry of alarm to be published in his journals. It was his minister Caulaincourt who seemed to reveal to him with sorrow, a fact already known to all; and to urge him to the extreme measures demanded by the attitude of Europe.

"Sire," said Caulaincourt to him in his public report, "alarming symptoms are all at once manifested on every side. An unaccountable system threatens to prevail amongst the allied powers, that of preparing for action without admitting a preliminary explanation with the nation they seem determined to fight with.

"It was reserved for the present epoch to see an assemblage of monarchs simultaneously interdict all communication with one great state, and close all access to its amicable assurances. The couriers sent from Paris for the different courts, have not been able to reach their destination. One could not go beyond Strasburg; another sent to Italy, has been obliged to return from Turin; a third destined for Berlin and the north, has been arrested at Mayence, ill treated by the Prussian commandant, and his despatches have been seized.

"When a barrier almost impenetrable rises thus between the French ministry and its agents abroad, between your Majesty's cabinet and those of other sovereigns, there is no other method open to your ministry, than by the public acts of foreign governments, to judge of their intentions.

"In England orders have been given to augment the British forces, as well by land as by sea. Thus the French nation ought on all sides to be on its guard. It may apprehend a continental aggression, and, at the same time, it must watch the whole extent of its coasts against the possibility of a descent.

"In Austria, in Russia, in Prussia, in all parts of Germany and in Italy; everywhere, in short, is seen a general armament.

"In the Netherlands, a convoy of 120 men and 12 officers, French prisoners returning from Russia, has been stopped in the neighbourhood of Tirlemont.

"On every point of Europe, and at the same moment, troops are preparing, arming, and marching, or they are ready to march."

V.

Intelligent men learnt nothing from the publication of this report; but the majority of the nation, continually lulled by the police with hopes of peace, or of a secret understanding with Austria, was moved according to the feeling in the different provinces. In one place, with stupor at the necessity for war; in another, with anger at the artifices of Napoleon, by which they had been mystified; elsewhere, and principally in the centre, and on all the eastern frontiers, the people were excited by patriotism and martial enthusiasm against the foreign enemy. In La Vendée, public feeling began to evince itself; and the chiefs, disconcerted at the outset, by the departure of the Duke de Bourbon, called around them the bravest of their soldiers, to form an army auxiliary to a coalition, of which the King was at once the object and the chief. The Emperor, to counterbalance in the minds of the people the disaffection and irritation which the declaration of the allied powers produced everywhere, caused to be drawn up by his partisans in the Council of State, an official refutation of the complaints of Europe against him, and an enumeration of his own grievances against Europe; a refutation, in which the cause of France, the cause of the revolution, and his own cause, although so distinct from, and often so opposite to each other, since the 18th Brumaire, were mixed up together with so much audacity, and so much artifice, that in rising for him the nation appeared to rise for itself.

"The Council of State," said the president of this body, who alone had the privilege of speaking at this moment; "the

Council of State has examined the declaration of the 13th March. It expresses such anti-social ideas, that the committee was induced to consider it one of those supposititious productions by which despicable men seek to lead astray people s minds, and to put public opinion on the wrong scent.

"We assert that this declaration is the work of French plenipotentiaries; because those of Austria, of Russia, of Prussia, and of England could not sign an act which the sovereigns and the nations they represent would hasten to disavow.

"Those persons may have risked the fabrication and publication of a document such as the pretended declaration of the 13th March, in the hope of arresting the progress of Napoleon, and of misleading the French people as to the real sentiments of the foreign powers.

"This brave and generous nation revolts against all that bears the character of cowardice and oppression; its affections are increased when their object is threatened or injured by a great injustice; and the assassination provoked by the first sentences of the declaration of the 13th March, will find no arm to accomplish it, either amongst the 25,000,000 of French, the majority of which have followed, guarded, and protected Napoleon from the Mediterranean to his capital; nor amongst the 18,000,000 of Italians, the 6,000,000 of Belgians, or borderers of the Rhine, and the numerous populations of Germany: who in this solemn conjuncture have never pronounced his name but with a respectful remembrance; nor by a single member of the indignant English nation, whose honourable sentiments disavow the language which they have dared to ascribe to the allied sovereigns.

"The nations of Europe are enlightened; they judge the rights of Napoleon, of the allied princes, and of the Bourbons.

"They know that the treaty of Fontainebleau is a treaty between sovereigns: its violation by the entrance of Napoleon upon the French territory could not, like any other infraction of a diplomatic act, produce any but an ordinary war, the result of which, with respect to person, could only be the condition of a conqueror or conquered, at liberty or a prisoner of war. With respect to possessions, to preserve, or to lose them; to increase

or diminish them; and that every thought, every menace, every attempt against the life of one prince at war with another, is a thing unheard of in the history of nations, and of the cabinets of Europe.

"But, nevertheless, what has Napoleon done? He has honoured with his protection men of all those nations who have been insulted by the infamous mission on which they have been summoned; he has shown himself moderate, generous, and a protector towards those even who have vowed death against him.

"When he spoke to General Excelmans, marching after the column which escorted Louis-Stanislaus Xavier; to General Count d'Erlon, who was to receive him at Lille; to General Clausel, when going to Bordeaux against the Duchess d'Angoulême; to General Grouchy, when marching to put a stop to the civil troubles excited by the Duke d'Angoulême; everywhere, in short, orders were given by the Emperor that persons should be respected and protected from all attack, from all danger, and from all violence, in their progress through the French territory, and at the period of their quitting it.

"Nations and posterity will judge on which side has been, in this great conjuncture, respect for the rights of people and of sovereigns, for the rules of war, the principles of civilization, the maxims of civil and religious law; and they will pronounce between Napoleon and the house of Bourbon.

"If, after having examined the pretended declaration of the congress, under this first aspect, we discuss it in its connection with the diplomatic conventions, and with the treaty of Fontainebleau of April 11th, ratified by the French government, it will be found that the violation can only be imputed to those very persons who make it a subject of reproach against Napoleon.

"The treaty of Fontainebleau has been violated by the allied powers, and by the house of Bourbon, in what regards the Emperor Napoleon and his family, and in what regards the rights and interests of the French nation.

"What ought Napoleon to do? Ought he to consent to the complete violation of the engagements made with him, and personally resigning himself to the fate that was preparing for

him, abandon also his wife, his son, his family, and his faithful servants to their frightful destiny.

"Such a resolution appears to be beyond all human powers, but, nevertheless, Napoleon would have adopted it, if the peace and happiness of France had been the price of this new sacrifice He would have again devoted himself for the French people, to whom he makes it his glory to owe everything, to whom he wishes to return all, and to whom alone he will answer for his actions and devote his life.

"It was for France alone, and to save it from the miseries of internal war, that he abdicated the crown in 1814. He returned to the French people the rights he held from them; and he left them at liberty to choose a new master, and to found their liberty and their happiness on institutions which should protect both the one and the other.

"He hoped for the preservation to the country of all it had acquired by twenty-five years of combats and of glory—the exercise of its sovereignty in the choice of a dynasty, and in the stipulation of the conditions under which that dynasty should be invited to the throne.

"He expected from the new government: respect for the glory of the army, the rights of brave soldiers, and the guarantee of all interests of recent date.

"But so far from this being the case, all idea of the sovereignty of the people was scouted.

"The principle upon which public and civil legislation has been based since the revolution has been equally thrown aside.

"France has been treated like a revolted country, reconquered by the arms of its former masters, and again enslaved by a feudal domination.

"A constitutional law has been imposed upon France, as easy to elude as to revoke, and in the form simply of royal ordonnances; without consulting the nation, without even hearing those bodies, now become illegal, the phantom of a national representation.

"The violation of the charter has only been restrained by the timidity of the government, and the extent of its abuse of authority has only been limited by its weakness.

Reply of the Council of State to the declaration of the allies.

"The breaking up of the army, the dispersion of its officers, the banishment of several of them, the debasement of the soldiers, the suppression of their gratuities, the withdrawing of their pay or pensions, the reduction of the emoluments of the members of the legion of honour, the contempt shown to the citizens, designated once more under the title of *tiers état*, the spoliation already commenced of the holders of national property, the actual depreciation in value of that portion which they were compelled to dispose of, the restoration of feudalism in its titles, its privileges, and its rights, the re-establishment of ultramontane principles, the abrogation of the liberties of the Gallican church, the abolition of the concordat, the re establishment of tithes, the regenerated intolerance of an exclusive worship, the domination of a handful of nobles over a people accustomed to equality: these are the things which the ministers of the Bourbons have effected, or wished to effect for France.

"It was under these circumstances that the Emperor Napoleon quitted the Isle of Elba.

"He has not brought war into the bosom of France; but, on the contrary, he has kept down the war which the holders of national property, constituting four-fifths of French proprietors, wronged by the nobles, would have been forced to declare against their oppressors; and the war which the Protestants, the Jews, and men of different forms of worship would have been compelled to maintain against their persecutors.

"He is come to deliver France, and his reception there has been that of a liberator.

"He arrived almost alone, travelled 220 leagues without obstacles, without fighting, and reoccupied without resistance, in the midst of the capital, and of the acclamations of the immense majority of the citizens, the throne abandoned by the Bourbons, who neither amongst the army, amongst their household, amongst the National Guard, or amongst the people, could arm a single person to try and maintain them thereon.

"And yet—replaced at the head of that nation which had already chosen him three times, and which has again designated

him a fourth time, by the welcome it has given him in his march and his triumphal arrival; of that nation by which and for which he wishes to reign—what does Napoleon desire? That which the French people themselves desire—the independence of France, internal peace, and peace with all nations, the execution of the treaty of Paris of May 30, 1814."

VI.

While France, at length recalled from its illusions, was reflecting on this declaration of the Council of State, wherein the liberal spirit of Benjamin Constant, the republican spirit of Carnot, and the servile spirit of the personal courtiers of the Emperor, struggled together in the formation of a style calculated to express such a diversity of opinions, the Emperor himself endeavoured to effect by the corruption of character, what he had not been able to achieve by the seduction of the foreign cabinets. There was at Paris one of those equivocal persons whose existence is a problem, who make use of their wit as a passport to the most opposite causes, and appear with equal likelihood to be serving all; who conciliate by their pleasing manners, and disarm suspicion by their volatility. This was M. de Montrond, an assiduous partisan of M. de Talleyrand in all his fortunes, and who flattered his taste for play and pleasure, to worm himself into his confidence. M. de Montrond, known under this character by all the influential men of the European cabinets, might naturally pass at Vienna for a confidant summoned from Paris by M. de Talleyrand, to acquaint him with the state of public opinion, and bring him news from the royalists. His presence and his name could excite no suspicion amongst the German police, being known to, and shielded by the friendship of the French negociators. This double aspect recommended M. de Montrond to the Emperor, who confided to him a conciliatory message, and promises of dignities and immense fortune for his old minister, if he would detach himself from the cause of Louis XVIII., which he said was abandoned by fortune, and come back, like Ney, the army and the people to his side; shake the confederation of hatred

of the foreign powers against him, and return to France, where the Emperor's gratitude would load him with wealth and titles superior to all his former munificence. Napoleon knew that of all temptations that could be offered to M. de Talleyrand the temptation of wealth was the most irresistible, because wealth abundantly acquired and abundantly squandered by this statesman, gratified at once the three principal passions of his soul—power, pleasure, and generosity. M. de Talleyránd, who had nothing to acquire in the illustration of his name, had at an early period summed up his life upon two instincts—power to live in grandeur, wealth to live in pleasure. This was the philosophy of his private life. The negociations with which he had been charged by the Directory and the Emperor, the recompenses he had received from the contracting powers, the munificence of those princes whose claims he had favoured at the congress, in the distribution of territories and indemnities, had forestalled the offers of Napoleon.

VII.

M. de Montrond arrived in fact at Vienna under shelter of the confidential friendship of M. de Talleyrand, whose name opened to him the gates of Germany. Accustomed to read in the countenance of his patron the secret thought which it was necessary to serve, he felt at the first word and the first smile that his mission had been foreseen, but that it was too late. Europe had forestalled M. de Montrond. The treaty of March 25th was signed, and M. de Talleyrand was backed by the cause of the world, and a million of men. "You have come too late," he said to M. de Montrond; "Europe and I have chosen our part! Remain with us, and do not mistake fortune as the Emperor mistook his hour of action." M. de Montrond, whom M. de Talleyrand made read the declaration and the conventions, did not even enter into negociation with the ambassador. He was removed from Vienna, however, lest he should try to open secret communications with Marie-Louise, with which he was said to be also charged. Baron de Stassart, of Belgian origin, and less suspected for that reason,

was also charged by the Emperor with a secret mission to the Empress at Vienna, but it was counteracted by the vigilance of M. de Metternich; in short, the Emperor was baffled in all his intrigues. It was felt that the possession of his son would be a means of negociating between France and him, as well as between him and Europe. By abdicating in favour of this son, he would have deadened the hatred which the liberals bore him at Paris, and by the same stroke of policy have allayed the terrors of Europe. This child, a captive in the palace of Vienna, was the object of all his thoughts and the despair of his ambition

VIII.

But while Napoleon was making vain attempts at negociation and arrangement with the allied powers, Fouché was maintaining more secret and more equivocal relations with his enemies. His functions as minister of police authorised him to have eyes, hands, and speech everywhere, under pretext of acquainting the Emperor with the plots of the allied powers, and of the parties hostile to his cause. His agents were, therefore, spread over all routes, and insinuated into every court of Europe. The private communications which he had had before the departure of the King with the Count d'Artois, M. de Bruges, the confidant of this prince, and M. de Blacas, and the hints that he had indirectly exchanged with M. de Talleyrand, rendered Fouché's agents but little suspected at the courts of Ghent and Vienna. Good hopes were entertained of a man who hated Bonaparte at bottom, who had been forced upon him by the revolutionary party, and who would inevitably lend a hand to his enemies, the moment their armies should have shaken him, to precipitate his fall. Napoleon, surrounded by snares, was compelled to suspect treason everywhere, without being able to fathom it. Chance, however, discovered to him one of those plots laid in his own cabinet, but which the audacity of Fouché enabled him to envelop still in doubt.

The secret police of the Emperor informed him one day that an agent of M. de Metternich had arrived at Paris; that he

had had a nocturnal interview with Fouché, that he was the bearer of a letter in cipher, written by the Austrian prime minister to the minister of police; that in this letter M. de Metternich requested Fouché to send a secret negociator to Basle on the 1st of May; that the Austrian cabinet would, on its side, send there a confidential agent furnished with a sign of recognition agreed upon, and that these two agents, thus put in communication in a neutral city, would establish between M. de Metternich and Fouché such concert as both might have occasion for in the prosecution of their policy. The Emperor, at once alarmed and irritated, would not give Fouché the time to prepare his answers, and to conceal one piece of treason by hatching another. He summoned him instantly, and asked him in the course of conversation if he had received any overtures from Austria. Fouché eluded the question, and the Emperor convinced by this silence of the treachery of his minister, dismissed him from his presence without displaying any suspicions. He at first broke out in fury and menaces before his most confidential adherents, talking of nothing less tnan to have his minister immediately arrested and tried for high treason. Then, like men whom necessity forces to give way, and who, to hide their weakness even from themselves, seek pretexts for doubt by deferring their conviction, he resolved to satisfy himself of the perfidy or the innocence of Fouché, before he should strike a blow which would reach, to his great detriment, all the revolutionary party devoted to that minister. He summoned, in the course of the night, that individual of the auditors of his Council of State who had gone to Elba, the bearer of his adherent's incentives to his enterprise, and who had since become a sharer of his confidence in the Tuileries. This was M. Fleury de Chaboulon, to whom he imparted the suspected plot of Fouché, and directed him to go and collect the proofs of it at Basle, by outstripping the emissary that his perfidious minister was to have despatched, to concert measures there with M. de Metternich.

IX.

"Go instantly to Caulaincourt," he said to him: "he will give you a passport for Basle. You will there meet, with the

assistance of the sign of recognition that Caulaincourt will give you, M. de Werner, the agent of M. de Metternich. I know that Metternich is incapable of a crime; assassination therefore is not in the case, but this is apparently the commencement of an intrigue in anticipation of my ruin, and of an understanding between Fouché and the allied powers to deprive me of the throne. First bring this mystery to light, then avail yourself of this interview with the secret agent of the Austrian cabinet to establish a reconciliation between me and Austria. Try and fathom the wishes of that court, and ascertain above all, if, in the event of my death on the field of battle, Prince Eugene Beauharnais, my adopted son, would not be accepted as regent and guardian to the King of Rome." The agent accordingly departed.

X.

On arriving at Basle he found M. de Werner, and made himself known to him by means of the concerted signal obtained from the intercepted correspondence of Fouché. He told M. de Werner that he came to him in the name of that minister, and that he might open himself to him without distrust. This the envoy of Prince Metternich effectually did. "The prince," he said, "has the highest opinion of the talents and character of Fouché. He thinks him too clear-sighted to rely upon the adventurer, who at this moment disturbs all Europe; he is convinced that Fouché has only consented to return to the councils of Napoleon, to spare his country the extremities of foreign and civil war; he does not doubt but that the necessity for the subversion of Bonaparte, and the re-establishment of the Bourbons, appears to him to be the only means of pacifying the world. Assassination would be a crime, as unworthy of the cause as of the honour of a statesman such as M. de Metternich; one means alone suits with the equity of Europe, and that is force. Europe is possessed of this; but one man alone, by his influence with parties in France, might avert this sad extremity, and spare the rivers of blood which must flow again to gratify the ambition of one! This man is

M. Fouché." "Have you had any communication with him yet?" demanded Bonaparte's envoy. "No," replied M. de Werner; "it was to make overtures to him on this subject, that the Prince de Metternich has sent me here. Fouché alone, in his estimation, can indicate the pacific means of arranging between Europe and France. We know that public opinion is adverse to this usurpation of Napoleon, and that the army alone is devoted to his cause. The people, surprised and intimidated, have not had time to rise against it; but now they reflect, they are humbled, and they are indignant. Our reports are unanimous on this increasing estrangement of public opinion from Napoleon. There is in the hands of a man, as experienced and as able as Fouché, an all-powerful mode of action between France and Napoleon, and between France and us. With this lever of public opinion he may move not only minds and things, but the Emperor himself. He does not believe in the possibility of preserving the Bourbons on the throne, grown old as they have done in unpopular ideas; but the allies do not impose any particular king on France. They have only one object—that of removing Napoleon." The envoys then discussed amongst themselves the names of the Duke d'Orleans, and Eugene Beauharnais, the different forms of federation, of royalty, and of regency which France might accept to escape from Napoleon and from the necessity of going to war. Being only desirous of sounding each other, the discussion was limited to vague possibilities and suppositions. One thing alone resulted from this conversation, which was, that everything was possible except Napoleon himself.

XI

On his return to Paris, the secret negociator made a report to the Emperor of his interview, of the hopes that were built on the sentiments of Fouché, but of the uncertainty in which they were as to his real disposition, and consequently of his innocence. "I know it already," said the Emperor; "Fouché himself has come to communicate to me the attempt at negociation opened by him in my interest, but unknown to me, at

Basle. He is mad for intrigues, but free from treason in this affair. Go and see him, and tell him he has my entire confidence. As to the allies, we will hope nothing from them. If Austria had the courage to make an alliance with me we would together save the world from Russia, which, in following me, has learned the routes of Germany and France. But Austria is already ruled by Alexander, who reigns in Europe; I alone could counterbalance him, and my value will not be known till they have destroyed me! But I shall sell my life dearly! They would gladly have me in an iron cage, to show me in chains to the world as a beast of prey! but they have not got me yet! I will show them the rousing of the lion! They do not suspect my strength! Were I to put on to-morrow the *bonnet rouge* of 1793, it would seal the destruction of them all!"

This idea of changing his part of a despotic sovereign into that of a tribune of the revolution, and to revive the power of the democracy which he had enchained, recurred every moment in his conversations. It was evident that he wavered between two thoughts, one as impracticable as the other: to seize again, through victory, the tyranny which he had exhausted when in his hands before, or to constitute himself the chief of an extinct revolution, which would never give him its confidence but as long as it should have occasion for a tribune, and for soldiers to protect its deliberations.

Fouché, on learning from the mouth of Napoleon's confidant the sending of this agent to Basle, to watch or counteract his negociation, but ill-concealed his resentment against the Emperor, whose suspicions offended him. He pretended, however, only to have acted with so much mystery, to secure a secrecy impossible with the Emperor, whose loquacious conversation would soon noise it abroad. He sent this same agent to Basle, charged with a letter from him to Prince Metternich, a letter intended beforehand by Fouché for certain publicity, and in which he affected to demonstrate to Prince Metternich the indispensable necessity of Napoleon to preserve order in France and an equilibrium in Europe. He thus kept himself on terms with all parties, without preference for any, but determined that that alone should triumph to

which events were propitious. The agent accordingly went a second time to Basle, where M. de Werner awaited him, received Fouché's letter, and limited himself, as at the first meeting, to listening without replying to the observations of Napoleon's government. He was astonished, however, at the pertinacity of Fouché, in maintaining the necessity of restoring the Emperor, after the communications which that minister, he said, had received from M. de Montrond, on his return from Vienna. Napoleon, on the return of his agent, learning that M de Montrond had brought some communications to Fouché, and that the latter had said nothing to him on the subject, did not doubt any longer that Fouché was silently working some deep intrigue. "I have a conviction that he is betraying me," he exclaimed, with that intemperance of language in which for years past his thoughts incessantly evaporated. "I know that he has intrigues at London and Ghent, and I am sorry I did not dismiss him before he came to communicate to me the correspondence he had opened with M. de Metternich; but now the time and the pretext are past. He would spread about everywhere that I am a tyrant sacrificing everything to my suspicions."

Thus, to regain the Empire, Napoleon besieged by doubts, and surrounded by snares, was now compelled to feign, to leave his enemies in his council, and to compromise with treason.

XII.

He also suspected at that time Marshal Davoust, his minister of war, who had sent a private agent to London to purchase muskets, which the manufactories of arms in France could not furnish fast enough for the general armament. The Emperor thought he saw in this negociation for procuring arms, a pretext on the part of Davoust to mask a negociation with the Bourbons. He thought him an accomplice of Fouché's, but he did not dare to express his suspicions aloud. Davoust had never been a flatterer of Napoleon's during his prosperity; but in his reverse he had remained faithful to him like Mas

donald. He was an officer of the old military school before the Revolution, a soldier of the Republic, a general of the Empire, and a warrior and patriot under all systems, the rough frankness of his disposition guaranteeing the fidelity of his service. In the person of Napoleon, menaced by all Europe, he defended the soil and the independence of his country, without questioning himself as to his repugnances or his political predilections. No one, by his independence even of the favour of Napoleon, was better calculated than Davoust to organise and put his army in motion; he was hurt by the suspicions of Napoleon, though they did not detach him from his duty; but these suspicions soon after prevented the Emperor from confiding in Davoust, and deriving from his services and his credit with the army all the advantages that he might otherwise have obtained. He obstinately refused to make the marshal his major-general* in the campaign about to open, and Davoust conjured him in vain to appoint Massena, who, though old, still bore a commanding aspect, minister of war and commandant of the National Guard of Paris. "Massena," said Davoust, "will suffice, by his name and by his ascendancy, for the capital and the war-office, where physical strength and activity are not so necessary as in the field: give me the second but the most useful rank, since it is that in which you require the greatest zeal and fidelity." The Emperor, beset with doubts after witnessing so much perfidy even amongst those who were devoted to him, was inflexible. He left Davoust behind, not daring to trust him beside him in his tent. Davoust bewailed his removal from the battle-field; while the army which confided in him because he had never served the Bourbons during the interregnum of his Emperor, distrusted the other marshals by whom Napoleon was surrounded. The suspicions which the Emperor conceived in

* This officer in the French service directs the administration, accounts, and recruiting department of the whole army, and despatches the orders of the General-in-Chief. His duties resemble those of our Adjutant-General, but are altogether different from those of our Major-General.—*Translator.*

his court, and which made him often hesitate in his choice of friends, carried that hesitation even into his camp

XIII.

But at the moment when the hopes of Napoleon were thus floating between impossible negociations and inevitable war, an event, independent of his will and opposed to his expectant policy, occurred in the south of Italy, and precipitated the catastrophe. It furnished Austria and the allied powers with the pretext they required to give a colour, in the eyes of their subjects and their armies, to the aggression decided on against France, and above all, against the Emperor. Murat summoned Italy to war, and marched out of his capital at the head of his army.

To comprehend this temerity of the King of Naples, brother-in-law and lieutenant of Napoleon, afterwards the ally of his enemies, in order to preserve his crown, then repenting his defection, on feeling his isolation on his throne after the fall of his benefactor and his friend, then plotting in secret for the restoration of the Empire with the exile of Elba, then counteracting the plans of Bonaparte, by prematurely giving the signal and provocation of a general war, in flying to his assistance before he was called, it is necessary to know well the nature, the character, the position, and the policy of Murat; one of those kings of fortune, whose soul aspired the most to glory, whose arm accomplished the greatest exploits, whose life was the most fruitful in adventures; the almost fabulous hero of an epoch of which Murat was the Roland, and Napoleon the Charlemagne.

XIV.

Murat was the son of a simple farmer, who kept a country inn at La Bastide, a straggling village in the south of France, fronting the Pyrenees; the inhabitants of whose valleys, strong, intelligent and adventurous, possess almost the

chivalrous genius of Spain, and recall even amongst the peasantry the plebeian nobleness and intrepidity of blood of Henri IV. There are in the south of Europe especially, as there are in Spain, in Scotland, and in the East, tribes of people amongst whom nobility is found in every rank; where even the mendicant feels the dignity of blood, because he has within him the pride of soul. The young Joachim Murat belonged to one of these tribes. As a child, and as a shepherd, he was strengthened by the rural habits, and by the rough agricultural labours of his family; serving by turns, like his brothers, in the fields, or in his father's *auberge*. He was passionately fond of horses, which, like those of Andalusia and Arabia, are reared by the peasants of the district, breaking them in with skill, and grooming with his childish hands, when occasion required it, those belonging to the travellers, chance visitors in the stables of his father; occupations which imbued him at an early age with the tastes and habits of a cavalier. His family, though rustic, being in easy circumstances, procured him in the village and in the small neighbouring town of Cahors, the instruction that was suited to a child who was destined either for the priesthood, or one of the professions at that time accessible to young men of his condition. His lively and flexible intellect accommodated itself as readily to these mental exercises, as his body did to the labours of the fields, or the dangers of the camp. His figure was tall and slim, and his neck easy and slender, his arms flexible, though strongly knit at the shoulders, his legs well shaped for the saddle, his feet well formed for clambering up the steep ascents of the mountains. His countenance was open and beaming, his eyes blue, his nose aquiline, his lips smiling, his colour fresh, his hair chesnut, long, and silky, curling naturally, and waving over his cheeks, or flowing down his shoulders in the manner of the Basques, all struck the eye and won the heart. There was something heroic stamped by the hand of nature on the outward appearance of this young man, which foretold something singular in his destiny. His mother and his brothers believed in it; while his sensitive heart, obliging and kind to all, won him the love of his comrades and turned aside all envy.

XV.

His passion for horses and arms very soon won the soul of Murat from the sacerdotal vocation to which his family had destined him in spite of nature. The sanctuary, with the idle and sedentary life of a priest, could not satisfy his fire and energy; and in 1787, when only fifteen years of age, he enlisted, contrary to the wishes of his parents, in the 12th regiment of light dragoons. Europe being then at peace, he bore for five years, without impatience or disgust, the life of a private soldier, for which his arms and his horse consoled him. The war of 1792 summoned his regiment to the frontiers, and gave an opportunity for displaying the bravery and aptitude of the young soldier. In the course of twelve months he passed through the ranks of corporal and troop quartermaster, and at the end of the year he was made a commissioned officer. The emigration having left the ranks free, and officers commissions vacant in abundance, he became a captain in 1793, and in a few succeeding years he was elevated by one exploit after another, to the rank of brigadier-general. Napoleon, who distinguished him everywhere in the first Italian campaign, appointed him his aide-de-camp at Milan, and repaid in friendship all the admiration and devotion evinced for him by young Murat. He attached him to his fortunes, conducted him to Egypt, witnessed his cavalry charges against the Mamelukes, felt how the electric spark of his valour inspired his troops, and recognising in him the buoyancy and enthusiasm of the army, he brought him back to France, when he returned to dazzle and enslave the directory, and confided to him the part of audacity and armed intervention at St. Cloud on the 18th Brumaire. It is known how Murat, being left by Bonaparte with his grenadiers at the door of the Orangery, while he went to address and dissolve the Council of Five Hundred, received into his arms the same Bonaparte, repulsed, disconcerted, and almost fainting; put him on horseback, aroused his courage, inspired his soldiers, covered his confusion, retrieved his defeat, and crowned his fortunes and his crime by dispersing

with his bayonets the unarmed representatives of the nation. From that day forward the grateful Bonaparte beheld in Murat a counterpart of himself, and resolved, from feeling as well as from policy, to attach to him this companion in arms, who attracted good fortune everywhere to his designs. These two warriors mingled their lives together, to double as it were their force by mutual attachment. Murat was appointed commandant of the guard of the Consul; but ambition was not a tie sufficiently strong to bind him to the fortunes of his friend, now become chief of the Republic; love drew still closer heart to heart, and blood to blood; for the young officer was in love with one of his general's sisters, Caroline Bonaparte. She was scarcely in the prime of youth, of a beauty less Grecian and classic, in the eyes of statuaries, than that which distinguished the Princess Pauline Borghese, but more gracefully attractive, of a more lofty soul, a more cultivated intellect, and a more royal ambition. Murat trembled to ask her in marriage, in the apprehension of a refusal grounded upon his humble birth and want of fortune: but Bonaparte, counting his bravery for riches and his own favour for blood, offered her to him. Murat, the most enamoured and the most happy of men, gave his heart to the sister, and to the brother his gratitude and devotion. Thenceforward the two families were mingled like their two destinies.

XVI.

He commanded the cavalry soon after at Marengo, received a sabre of honour for his exploits, was appointed commander-in chief of the detachment of the French army which marched into the Roman states, re-established the Pope at Rome, drove out the Neapolitans, entered Naples as a mediator, and concluded a peace with the King of the two Sicilies. On his return he went to visit his humble family and to show off his glory in his father's village, but with a modesty and a cordiality which elevated to his own level all the old witnesses of his original obscurity. Bonaparte appointed him governor of Paris, and he executed the functions of his office with a degree

of luxury and grandeur which served as a foretaste of the Empire. He paved the way to the throne for his brother-in-law, and carried all his wishes into effect; but Bonaparte knew him well enough to ask nothing of him that could debase his heart or tarnish his name: he charged Murat to dispense his favours, and others to execute his rigours.

This was the period when Bonaparte, in pursuance of his Machiavelian views which made him believe in the necessity of useful crimes, caused to be seized in a neutral territory, tried, and sacrificed in one night, the young and innocent son of the Condés. Murat lent neither heart nor hand to this tragedy; his post as governor of Paris, and his family connexion with Bonaparte, however, made people believe at the time that he had imbrued his hands in that innocent blood, but this was a calumny of ignorance. Having learnt from rumours at the palace, and from Madame Bonaparte, that something sinister was plotting against a prince of the Bourbon family, he availed himself of the voice and influence of his young wife to dissuade Bonaparte from every measure which was not required by prudence and the safety of his government. He appealed to glory as well as pity. He was not initiated in any of the circumstances which preceded the attempt. His functions as governor of Paris required that he should designate the members of the court-martial; and he did so at the orders of the minister of war, without choice of their rank, and amongst the commanding officers of corps in the garrison of Paris. He might have looked for an acquittal, and he hoped without any doubt for a commutation of the sentence in the event of condemnation. He was either sick, or affected to be so, during those fatal days, the better to keep his hand out of this snare; and he confined himself to sending at ten o'clock in the evening of the day of judgment, Major Brunet, his aide-de-camp, and Colonel Ravier, of the 18th regiment, to Vincennes, to furnish him with a report of the proceedings of the court-martial, as soon as it should be over. The aide-de-camp and the colonel were entirely ignorant, as all Paris was, of the arrival of the Duke d'Enghien in that fortress, and of the object of the court-martial which

they were ordered to attend. They mutually questioned each other on the road, without the power of communicating their conjectures to each other. They were not the bearers of any message, of any letter, or of a single word from the governor of Paris to the judges or the superior officers of the castle. Their mission was simply to know what was passing, and to report it to their general. These two officers only learnt for the first time in the courtyard of Vincennes the name of the prisoner; they were present at the judgment, and at the precipitate murder which made it more odious and more ferocious. They departed in dismay before daylight for Paris Major Brunet (since a general officer), a young man of twenty, with a pure heart and a sensitive soul, entered the bedchamber of Murat, and recounted what he had seen to him and his wife, who both uttered exclamations of surprise and horror in listening to it. They knew of the trial, but they evidently did not anticipate the execution, and both mingled their tears with those of the aide-de-camp. It is not thus that an accomplice receives the announcement of a crime; Murat was more than innocent of it: he was heart-broken at it for his own part, and overwhelmed with shame for the glory of his brother-in-law.

XVII.

After the Empire had been proclaimed, Murat was invested with the dignity of grand admiral, a dignity of the court which gave him rank amongst the grand imperial feudalities, which Napoleon dreamt of re-constituting, in imitation of Charlemagne. But war was his real dignity: he followed the Emperor in it everywhere, and commanded the cavalry in all the great campaigns from 1800 to 1808. The Grand Duchy of Berg, a principality on the right bank of the Rhine, seized upon as spoil of Prussia, was given to him in sovereignty by Napoleon. But he dreamt of a more regal sovereignty, and the Emperor led him to hope for one to whet his ardour. Murat was charged to conduct a French army to Madrid, under the pretext of pacifying Spain, which was torn by the dissensions of the royal family, but in reality to expel the Bourbons,

and to gain one throne more for his dynasty. Murat, at once a negociator, general of an army, apparent protector of the court, and interested executer of the wishes of Napoleon, conspiring and fighting for himself, put down a revolt at Madrid, interposed between father and son in the palace of Aranjuez, compelled the abdication of the old king, induced the young one to go to Bayonne, where the perfidy of Napoleon, who had promised him a throne, awaited him to give him a prison. Spain, deprived of its royal family, and occupied by the French troops, was an empire to bestow; and Murat expected it, having purchased it with so much bravery, so many services, and so many stratagems. But Bonaparte, badly counselled by the ambition of his relatives, gave it to his brother Joseph, already King of Naples, promising Murat the kingdom of Naples in compensation. Murat, betrayed, discontented, and desperate at having conquered Spain and stained it with blood for another, conceived a deep resentment, and deemed himself grievously wronged. He fell sick of that languor which follows the disappointment of great ambition: he refused to see the Emperor, shut himself up in bitter isolation, and finally received the throne of Naples, not as a kingdom, but as an insult from his benefactor. He took possession of it in 1808, drove the English from the island of Capri, whence their flag offended his eyes in his palace, dazzled his people by his glory, attached them to him by his favours, and governed them with a degree of wisdom and goodness which made him adored in Italy. His court, brilliant with the splendour of arms, of fêtes, and of pleasure, was one continued intoxication of ambition, love, and war.

XVIII.

He was, nevertheless, though a king, nothing but a crowned vassal of Napoleon. He had added this name of Napoleon to his own, as a sign of adoption on the one part, and of patronage on the other. He continued to serve, in his rank of marshal of the Empire, and commandant-general of the

French cavalry, in the campaigns of the Emperor. The crown had not in the least diminished his intrepidity: he was still the first cavalry officer of the Empire. He became intoxicated, as it were, in the midst of fire; but the gentleness of his heart, nevertheless, made him repugnant to bloodshed. What he wished for at the head of his squadrons was not the death of his enemies, but their flight, and his victory. His bravery was a hurricane which dispersed everything before him. In charging he never used a sabre, nor even a small sword; the only weapon he wore on horseback was a Roman blade, broad and short, useless in attack or defence, against the long blades of the enemy's cavalry. This blade, with a hilt of mother of pearl, artistically inlaid with precious stones, was ornamented with the portrait of the beautiful Queen Caroline, his wife, and of their four children: he never drew this weapon from the scabbard but once, in a moment of great danger, and then not to strike with, but to animate his escort to charge with him a cloud of cavalry by which he was surrounded. He said to the Count de Mosbourg, his friend and minister, who had administered his finances with talent and fidelity worthy of a greater empire, and whom he remembered with the disinterestedness and adoration of friendship: "My sweetest consolation, when I look back on my career as a soldier, a general, and a king, is, that I never saw a man fall dead by my hand. It is not, of course, impossible that in so many charges, when I dashed my horse forward at the head of the squadrons, some pistol shots fired at random may have wounded or killed an enemy, but I have known nothing of the matter: if a man fell dead before me, and by my hand, his image would be always present to my view, and would pursue me to the tomb." Sensibility of heart is thus allied, in the modern warrior, with the impetuosity of courage. He craves for victory in the mass, but the details of carnage excite his horror and his pity.

XIX.

Napoleon's campaign in Russia drew Murat for the last time away from the delights of his court of Naples. He felt

repugnant to that war of pride, and of defiance to nature, wherein Napoleon was going to stake the lives of 2,000,000 of men and the empire of the continent, against a barren conquest, which it was impossible to possess. But Murat could not listen at a distance to the noise of the cannon, and the echoes of the glory of his ancient rivals in fame, without rushing with them into the field of battle. He therefore joined the Emperor on his march, furnished him with some Neapolitan regiments which he wished to inure to war on a grand scale, and resumed the command in chief of 150,000 cavalry, the greatest assemblage of horses that ever traversed Europe since the invasion of Asia. The Emperor embraced him, shared his tent with him as before, treating him at the same moment as a friend, a brother-in-law, and a king Murat made nearly the whole campaign himself, leading advanced guards against an enemy who always retired after the first onset. The King of Naples seemed to be mad for fighting, and to enjoy these his last glimpses of glory. There was no battle between the Borysthenes and Moscow that he was not in the midst of, and it seemed as if he could not find enough to satisfy his insatiable thirst of glory. The clouds of Cossacks which perpetually gathered and melted away around him, and who recognised him from afar by the brilliant splendour of his costume, played this game of the sabre themselves with Murat as if in an oriental tournament. They approached him; they called him their French "Hetman," as the Mamelukes, charmed with his valour, called him their "Bey" in Egypt, and they received presents from him.

XX.

This passion for military splendour which exposed the life of Murat to the blows of the enemy, was part of the charm by which he led on his soldiers. His costume was a portion of his character, with which he courted popularity in the camp. Splendour was for him the image of glory. A native of the south, he loved, like the Cid, Spanish pomp, showy steeds, arms of precious workmanship, and the

rich and highly coloured dresses of the Arabs. His uniform was never anything but the dazzling caprice of his imagination; he generally wore boots of red morocco, with large folds falling over the instep, ornamented with golden spurs; white pantaloons fitting close, and displaying the manly beauty of his limbs; a brocaded vest, a short tunic fitting close to the waist, trimmed with fur, and garnished with gold lace; a high crowned hat, like that of the attendants of Francis I., adorned with two or three plumes of feathers, and an egret, floating and sparkling in the air. A theatrical hero in appearance, but readily pardoned for his warlike ostentation, because it was surpassed by his bravery, and that the scene of his display was always in the midst of fire and carnage. Napoleon sometimes smiled with his lieutenants at this somewhat puerile display of his brother-in-law; but he was pleased even with this excess, because it contrasted so well with his simplicity—another species of charm with which he also struck the eyes of the soldiers.

XXI

Whilst Napoleon, a conqueror almost without fighting, and shut up in the trap of Moscow, lost time in hesitating between a march in advance, a hollow peace, and an impossible retreat, Murat bivouacing outside the walls, at the head of 30,000 cavalry, beat around the country to seek for or drive away the enemy from Moscow. The disasters of this retreat are well known, in which the army of Napoleon, retarded by his indecision, struggled, while decimating itself, amidst deserts of snow, against men and elements. Of 500,000 men and 150,000 horses which had passed the Boristhenes some months before, scarcely 60,000 disbanded soldiers and a few hundred horses repassed it in the midst of winter. Never since the days of Xerxes had so complete and so continued a destruction by the hand of nature strewed with the carcases of men and horses 500 leagues of deserts. But the soul of Murat did not bend before this spectacle; he had foreseen it, and he braved it like a man determined to leave his life there

also, or at least to bring his name untarnished out of the struggle. He used up his stud, even to his last charger; and when his cavalry had almost entirely vanished in the battle and the snow, he collected the few men that remained around the Emperor, and commanded the sacred battalion which supplied the place of his guard—a small, select troop, the pitiable remnant of an immense army, in which the generals performed the duty of officers, and the colonels and majors filled up the ranks as soldiers. At length, abandoned by the Emperor, who went off precipitately to reach Paris before the rumour of his disasters, and to prevent the reaction of so great a fall, Murat received the impracticable mission to stop this torrent of flight, and to reorganise in the centre of the now hostile Germany an army which was nothing more than a band of men demoralised and decimated by the elements. Murat himself resisted no longer. After having vainly attempted to secure the obedience of the chiefs whom the absence of Napoleon encouraged to rebel, and of the soldiers who no longer listened to anything but the voice of individual safety, Murat, recalled also by his solicitude for the fate of his throne at Naples, deserted this shadow of an army entrusted by the Emperor to his command, and departed in the night for his kingdom, transferring the charge of rallying the troops to Prince Eugene Beauharnais.

XXII.

Napoleon, indignant, but ill concealed from the eyes of France his private anger against his brother-in-law and friend. He insulted him with his own hand in a note inserted on this subject in the public journals. "The King of Naples, being ill," said Napoleon, "has been obliged to quit the army. Prince Eugene has assumed the command of it. The Viceroy of Italy is better accustomed to an extensive administration; he has the entire confidence of the Emperor." This was declaring aloud that Murat no longer possessed it; in fact, this confidence had been shaken a long time back. The Emperor knew that Murat and his court were besieged, like Bernadotte,

with insinuations from Austria and from England; that he listened too readily to them for the interests of his throne; and that Fouché, an exile at Naples, gave to Queen Caroline, Murat's wife, and soon after to Murat himself, Machiavelian counsels of a distinct peace with the allied powers, and a separation of his cause from the lost cause of Napoleon.

Napoleon no longer restrained his anger, when at length he perceived these crooked manœuvres of a vassal court of his, and a meditated defection in his own family; but, according to his custom, when he was weak, and wished to appear strong, he betrayed his anger before the proper time, and he insulted, instead of striking. "I do not speak to you," he thus imprudently wrote to one whom he had made a king, and rendered independent in crowning him; "I do not speak to you of my discontent on learning the line of conduct you pursued after my departure from the army; that springs from the weakness of your character. You are a good soldier on the field of battle, but beyond that you have neither energy nor character. Are you, then, one of those who think that the lion is already dead, and that they may share his spoils with impunity? Should you calculate upon this, you would be deceived. You have done me all the mischief you could since my departure from Wilna. The title of king has turned your head; if you wish to preserve it, conduct yourself well!"

XXIII

Words such as these falling upon the heart of a proud but sensitive man, were calculated still further to envenom, rather than to win back that heart. Murat was mortified, and returned insult for insult. "You have inflicted," said he, "a cruel wound upon my honour, and it is no longer in your Majesty's power to heal it. You have outraged an old companion-in-arms, who has always been faithful to you in your dangers, who has in no small degree contributed to your victories, who has been one of the mainstays of your power, and who formerly rallied your failing courage on the 18th Brumaire.

"'When one has the honour,' you say, 'to belong to your

illustrious family, one ought to do nothing which may compromise its interests, or obscure its splendour.' The only answer, Sire, I shall make to this is, that your family has received as much honour from me as you have conferred upon me by my marriage with your sister.

"Although a king, I regret a thousand times the period when, as an officer only, I had superiors, but no master. I have risen to a throne, but in this high position, being tyrannised over by your Majesty, and controlled in my government, I have sighed more than ever for independence and freedom. It is thus that you afflict, that you sacrifice, to your slightest suspicions, those who are most faithful to you, and who have served you best in the brilliant career of your successes; it is thus that you have sacrificed Fouché to Savary, Talleyrand to Champagny, Champagny himself to Bassano, and Murat to Beauharnais, who has the great merit in your eyes of silent obedience, and the still greater one, because more servile, of having quietly announced to the senate the repudiation of his own mother.

"For my part, I can no longer stand in the way against granting to my subjects some relief by commerce, and I must therefore repair the mischief they suffer from a maritime war.

"From all I have said respecting your Majesty and myself, it results that our old confidence is mutually impaired. You will act, Sire, as you may judge proper; but whatever provocation you may give me, I still am your faithful brother-in-law,

"JOACHIM."

XXIV.

This insulting correspondence, sometimes incited, sometimes softened by the counsels of Queen Caroline, the Emperor's sister, but, at the same time, the ambitious and domineering wife of Murat, left its sting behind, while in appearance there was a return of friendship between the two courts. When Napoleon went to Germany to open the campaign of 1813, he wrote to Murat to offer him the command of his cavalry again. The situation of Murat was cruel and perplexing on this

summons of his old chief, who was going to fight his last battles on the soil which had witnessed their ten years' struggle; to perish, perhaps, in trying to seize upon victory again, but also perhaps to reconquer Vienna and Berlin, to enforce the submission of his enemies, and obtain a triumphant peace. It was as painful to Murat to abandon his benefactor when conquered, as it was dangerous to offend his brother-in-law when a conqueror He hesitated, and his ministers counselled him to remain neutral, and in ambiguous observation at Naples. "Have you not done enough," they said to him, "for gratitude and for glory? Is it not time to think at length of yourself, of your family, and of your kingdom, which will be lost in the defeat if you meddle with the combat?" Murat, already secretly engaged with Austria and England, by a treaty which would give him all Italy, bore for a long time the anguish of uncertainty between his throne, his private duties, his public duties towards France, and his honour as a soldier, brother-in-law, and king. The imprudent act he had committed in listening to Austria and allying himself against his duty, lay heavy on his mind. The observation of Napoleon and of the world, and the suspicions of the French generals, of his court and of his army, equally intimidated him. He unfortunately thought he could reconcile to himself two men the general and the sovereign. As a warrior and lieutenant of the Emperor he decided on joining the army, and fighting again in his cause; and as a king he thought he could resume, after thus doing his duty, his private conventions with Austria; he was thus unfaithful to two causes from not having embraced one, fighting with his arm for Napoleon, and with his heart against him. Shameful and deplorable situation in which safety is sacrificed no less than honour.

XXV.

Marshal Ney, his faithful competitor in glory, and his Parisian friends, wrote to him that his tardiness caused great scandal in the army; and the Count de Mosbourg and the Queen conjured him to depart. He acknowledged to them,

under the pressure of the moment, the secret treaty signed between him and Lord Bentinck, the virtual Viceroy of England in Sicily. This mysterious act had been concluded, as if they had been concerting a crime in the solitary island of Ponza, on the desert coast of the Roman states. The Queen, who was ambitious and full of false seeming, appeared openly to approve of an error which she blamed inwardly; and she assisted her husband in conciliating both sides by advising him to join the Emperor, but to leave her the Regency; promising him to make the army of Italy march in her name as Regent, and as if unknown to him, at a concerted signal. The King, embarrassed by his own cunning, departed the following day for the campaign of Dresden, leaving behind him this tangled web of intrigues to unravel; still further complicated by the ambition of his wife, and by the jealousy of power which he entertained against the counsellors of the Queen.

The King had scarcely gone, when Lord Bentinck, seeing in his departure a rupture of the secret conventions, and an act of hostility, quitted the isle of Ponza, and looked on the treaty as not ratified.

XXVI.

Meanwhile Murat, carried away by his old enthusiasm, was flying to meet the Emperor in Germany, and was received in the arms of Napoleon as a reconciled friend, whom he soon saw fighting, as in the greatest battles of his military career, by his side at Dresden, and on all the battle fields of that last campaign. At the head of 30,000 cavalry Murat broke through the allied army under the walls of Dresden, and drove back the Prussians, Austrians, and Russians. 30,000 prisoners were the fruit of his exploits; and his heroism was acknowledged by the army and the Emperor. But these victories soon ended for Napoleon in the general rising of Germany and in the defeat of Leipsic. Murat returned to his kingdom more undecided than ever; he felt that the support of his life was crumbling, and he resolved to look for another within himself

He had scarcely arrived at Naples when he assembled in secret council his most intimate confidants, and deliberated with them on the propriety of being faithful or otherwise to his benefactor, questions upon which honour and feeling should be the only guides. The conclusions were that it was necessary to conform to fortune, and sacrifice friendship to policy and the throne. Fouché, who had always maintained the ascendant of a superior intellect over a mind easily controlled, hastened from Rome to have some private conferences with Murat, under pretence of retaining him in the cause of Napoleon. It is supposed that his private advice was different from his public proceedings, and that he led Murat to look upon the fall of Napoleon as imminent, and the kingdom of Naples as involved in this fall, unless he sought for some other support. Fouché had scarcely departed for Rome when the Count de Neipperg, a young military diplomatist, as well practised in court intrigues as in the manœuvres of the camp, hastened to Naples in the middle of December, conferred with the Duke de Gallo, an old negociator of Ferdinand's, but then attached to Murat, and a treaty resulting from these conferences was signed on the 11th of January, 1814, between Austria and Murat. By this treaty Murat, to redeem his crown from the coalition, ranged himself amongst the enemies of France. He promised to furnish 30,000 men to operate in Italy; Austria furnishing 60,000. These two armies were to be commanded by Murat in person, and would combine their movements against the viceroy, Eugene Beauharnais, commanding the French army at Milan. The price of this defection to Murat was the throne of Naples, given up by King Ferdinand, and guaranteed to him and to his dynasty by the allied powers: an inheritance of blindness and ingratitude which time would not ratify. England became a party to this treaty, and promised to maintain an inoffensive attitude in Italy towards Murat.

XXVII

This treaty was scarcely signed when rumour spread it abroad through Italy, and the cry of independence, which was

smouldering in every Italian heart, burst forth in the peninsula. Murat favoured this movement of opinion, which would, he thought, constitute him not the auxiliary of Austria but the liberator and the sovereign of that vast empire to which, he was going to restore liberty and unity, the awaking of the long sleep of Italy. But even his thoughts were compressed by his situation. The garrisons of Napoleon at Florence, at Rome, and at Ancona distrusted him; Austria watched him with disquietude; England reserved itself to keep him within the limits of the treaty which secured him the kingdom of Naples. He attempted to deceive all these powers by the rapidity and equivocal character of his movements. He reassured General Miollis, commandant of Rome, and the commandant of Ancona, Barbou; he pushed forward his columns on the Roman states, under pretence of simply demanding a passage; but the French generals shut themselves up in the citadels Pressed by Austria to keep his promise, he ordered his troops to compel the French to evacuate the fortified places. He left Naples himself at the head of a second column of 20,000 men, but without money or provisions; calculating on chance, on sympathy, and on insurrection to supply him with means. He advanced thus upon Bologna; and during his march Rome, Ancona, and Civita-Vecchia capitulated, the garrisons retiring at liberty upon France. Lord Bentinck at the same time effected a landing of British troops, which were directed upon Genoa, and bearing on their colours, "Liberty and Independence of Italy."

Every thing announced an impending collision between the allied Neapolitans, Austrians and English, and Prince Eugene, who still occupied Lower Italy for Napoleon, with 50,000 French and Italian troops, inured to war, and under a faithful viceroy.

XXVIII.

But whether from remorse at fighting against his old brethren in arms, or from distrust of Austria, or expectation of some great national insurrection of Italy, which should clear

the stage for him, and improve the conditions of his treaty, Murat, motionless at Bologna, with one-half of his army, consumed the time, put Austria out of patience, inspired the English at Genoa with suspicion, and seemed to stop half-way in his defection to learn from beyond the Alps on which side fortune would declare herself. He flattered everybody, and even Napoleon, with having raised in his interest the flag of independence. But the people of Italy did not rally around it, seeing in these strangers the instruments of French domination, of which they were just then weary; for to a large portion of these unfortunate people liberty is but a change of masters, and the present tyranny is always the most detested. Murat, bold and timid at the same time, established a government in the provinces traversed by his two armies, as if they were destined soon to form one vast Italian unity under his sceptre. The English and the Austrians spread everywhere, on the contrary, promises of restoring the ancient states distinct and independent, under the princes of the house of Savoy, of the house of Este, of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and of the Pope, then a captive at Fontainebleau. In this uncertainty of their approaching fate, the people remained in appearance disinterested spectators of the scene. The city of Naples alone, to which the trade with England had been reopened, and intoxicated with the hope of dominating over the rival states, glorified itself in the promised triumphs of its king.

XXIX.

But this long immobility of the King of Naples at Bologna, cooled the enthusiasm and relaxed the spring of his army. The French generals quitted it, to remain innocent of a parricidal war against their country; while the Neapolitan generals, although faithful, inured to the field, and formed in the school of our great wars, submitted unwillingly to a sovereign, a warrior it was true, but whom they had always seen playing the second part to a great man. They beset him with their dissensions and their counsels, and Murat yielding and resisting

by turns, the impulse relaxed on every side. No one could perceive very clearly the motives, the object, and the results of this expedition; for the ambiguity of the policy imparted an incoherence to the acts. The generals called upon the King for an explanation; Lord Bentinck required him to deliver Leghorn into his hands, as a pledge of the independence of Tuscany. On the other hand, the Pope, delivered by Napoleon from captivity, in order to re-establish in Rome the seat of European Catholicism, was proceeding towards his capital, in the midst of the populace of Italy, intoxicated with joy, and prostrate before him. The pontiff was approaching Bologna before Murat could decide whether he should receive him as a priest who was going to reclaim his temple, or as a sovereign going to take possession of his states. Surprised by the Pope in the midst of his indecision, Murat was obliged to feign the common enthusiasm for Napoleon's captive, to escort him to Cesena, and to evince for him an outward respect which clashed with his secret ambition of keeping Rome for himself.

XXX.

At the same time, the Carbonari of Naples, a mysterious sect, since celebrated by the explosion of 1820, and by the revolutionary insurrection of Naples and Piedmont, but at that time instigated and put in motion by Queen Caroline, wife of Ferdinand, King of Sicily, were agitating the two Calabrias, proclaiming the deposition of Murat, and the restoration of the house of Bourbon, and seizing upon these two provinces, the most warlike of the kingdom of Naples. This news, and the last successes of Bonaparte in Champagne, exaggerated by distance, decided Murat for a moment to reconcile himself and to unite his forces with those of Prince Eugene Beauharnais. He sent confidential negociators from Bologna, to this prince at Milan; but they were repulsed as the emissaries of a traitor. This refusal to negociate, together with the urgent entreaties of the Austrian generals, and the English and Russian commissioners who besieged him, forced Murat to

attack the French. He did accordingly attack and conquer them, driving them into Reggio, where he hemmed them in; but instead of pursuing his triumph, and seizing upon the fruits of his victory, he granted a capitulation to the troops shut up in the city, allowed them to take the route to Milan, and thus increased the suspicions between himself and the Austrians.

He advanced, however, on Placentia, while Count de Bellegarde, who commanded the Austrians, was threatening Milan.

XXXI.

Such was the attitude of Murat, seeking to consume the days and the weeks in an expectation the results of which were all equally alarming, when a courier from Paris reached him at noon on the 13th of April, 1814, under the walls of Placentia. He was walking at that moment with General Coletta, in the garden of a country-house near the city, where he had established his head quarters. He opened his heart, full of anxiety, of contradictory designs, and of remorse, to General Coletta, a good adviser, and a man of remarkable talent and resolution, but a Neapolitan, attached before everything to his country. Murat opened his letter, read it in silence, turned pale, suddenly withdrew from Coletta, paced backwards and forwards in a hurried manner, like a man struck by a mortal blow, raised his hands towards heaven, then looked sorrowfully upon the earth, and approaching Coletta and some other generals of his suite, who had hastened up astonished at his attitude, he announced to them the capture of Paris, the deposition and captivity of Napoleon at Fontainebleau, the inevitable fall of the Empire, and he wept! The enemy, the despot, the tyrant had disappeared from his eyes; and in Bonaparte he no longer saw anything but the friend, sunk at last beneath the blows of fortune, and sinking in the belief of his infidelity, and seeing him even amongst the ranks of his enemies; his emotion inspired his generals with pity and compassion.

XXXII.

One hour after this, whether he had not the courage to pursue, in common with the allies, the ruin of the French in Italy, or whether he was thinking of his own throne and family, which the reaction of such a catastrophe might suddenly overwhelm at Naples, he issued orders to his troops for the suspension of all hostilities, and retired, disarmed and disconcerted, to Bologna. From thence, after having arranged the return of his army into his own territories, and left one of his best generals, Carascosa, with 6,000 men in the marshes, he set off himself for his capital, which he found calm and faithful. The Queen, his court, and the people received him as a conqueror, and disguised, under multiplied fêtes, the silent grief and internal fears which already were smouldering in all hearts. A presentiment of the approaching fall of this vassal royalty of Napoleon's was in the wind. The race of ancient monarchies could not long tolerate, much less protect, this baseless usurpation at Naples, whilst Ferdinand was reclaiming his throne, and the principle of the legitimacy of crowns was becoming the public law of Europe. Moreover, the services rendered by Murat in the last campaign to the coalition, were so interested, so doubtful, and so trifling, that he might, without too much injustice, be considered as much the enemy as the friend of the allies. His throne trembled like his conscience; he had not even the consolation of reverse, fidelity to a vanquished cause: remorse was mingled with his adversity.

XXXIII.

He affected not to believe the news, in order to deprive his subjects of all pretext for abandoning him. Uneasy however about the resolutions of the Congress of Vienna, and of the partiality of M. de Talleyrand for the Bourbons of Sicily, whose restoration the Bourbons of France were desirous of effecting at every sacrifice, to strengthen their principle, Murat sent two ambassadors to Vienna, the Duke of Campo-Chiaso and the Prince

Cariati. They were received there with distrust, excluded from the conferences, reduced to play the part of observers of that which was concealed from them; importunate solicitors of a throne already secretly made over to another competitor Suspected by the legitimate courts, and odious to the French of Napoleon's party, these envoys hardly disguised from their master the dangers which threatened him. They were not long in learning, or suspecting the secret treaty concluded between England, France, and Austria, for the expulsion of Murat from the throne of Naples; but the latter was determined not to yield it up. He thought that with the love of his subjects, the number and the bravery of his troops, the natural strength of his frontiers, and Italian patriotism, aroused at his voice, he could brave England, Austria, and France, and conquer his throne upon the very soil where he had founded it.

He felt that liberty alone could conciliate for him the love of the Neapolitan nation, more enlightened, and more anxious for representative institutions than the rest of Italy. He therefore promised his subjects a constitution, and created, *ad interim*, deliberative councils, which afforded a shadow of national intervention in his still absolute government. He reduced the taxes, opened the ports, and gave freedom to commerce; he dismissed with grief, but to humour the spirit of the people, all the French who held rank in his army, and placed them in his civil administration; he courted popularity through ingratitude, he instituted strong bodies of civic militia, he increased the army and multiplied luxury and fêtes, hiding, under a show of security and splendour, the dangers and disquietudes by which he was devoured. The theatres, the hunting parties, the reviews, the brilliancy of his court attracted all Europe; he seemed eager to enjoy a throne which was slipping from under him.

XXXIV

Dark intrigues were also plotting in the palace of Naples under this outward show of confidence and peace. The

Princess Pauline Borghese, sister of Napoleon, and of the Queen of Naples, arrived there from the Isle of Elba, and planned a reconciliation between Murat, still a king, and the exiled Emperor. Both the heart and the interest of the King of Naples led him to wish for the return of Napoleon to France; for he sighed to redeem the past and to secure the future. He did not take long to comprehend that the last extremities of war by the side of Bonaparte were of more value to his brother-in law than the favours, so dearly purchased and so ill-guaranteed, of Europe. Once unfaithful, through caprice and interest badly understood, to his duty and to his sentiments, he now felt that his duty, his feelings, and his interest demanded from him a fidelity, even to death, to the author of his fortune, and the chief of his dynasty. He looked incessantly from the terrace of his palace upon the sea that surrounded the Isle of Elba, whence one of the many sails that appeared upon the horizon might some time or other bear to his shores, or to the shores of France, the man he had betrayed, but whom he now implored a sight of. But the Emperor, acquainted with his repentance by his sister Pauline, although he had pardoned Murat, and had sent him word to keep himself quiet, but ready, did not sufficiently rely upon the firmness of his character to throw himself at the mercy of his brother-in-law into Italy. He would doubtless have found an army there, but that army had Italy to march through, and Austria to conquer, before it could cross the Alps, and restore him to France. Promptitude and surprise were the forces upon which he most calculated. Murat appeared to be absorbed by the fêtes which occur at this season of the year; and he was in the midst of a circle of his friends and generals, in the Queen's drawing-room, on the 4th of March, when a messenger from the Emperor brought him the news of his landing at Cannes, and his march upon Paris. Murat, without communicating to his court the news he had received, drew the Queen into a retired apartment of the palace to concert with her the manner in which he should comport himself when the event became known. After conferring some time together on the subject, Murat returned to the drawing-room with a countenance radiant

with joy, announced the landing of Napoleon to his courtiers, and retired immediately to reflect and hold a council.

XXXV.

But though his resolution had been taken before, and though he only consulted his councillors to induce them to adopt his opinions, he pretended to hear of this breach of Napoleon's exile with the same indignation manifested by his enemies, and he sent off letters during the night to all the courts, in which he swore to observe neutrality and fidelity to the treaty with Austria.

The Queen, the friends of this princess at the court, and the ministers and councillors of Murat did not hesitate to deprecate any movement on his part against the allied powers, or any joint responsibility in the enterprise of Napoleon. But he was deaf and impetuous as on the field of battle; he enumerated his forces, and dazzled himself with his illusions on his popularity in Italy. "Italy waits only for a signal and a man," said he. "I have 80,000 soldiers inured to war, battalions of provincial militia, a National Guard, coast guards, and 2,000 foreign soldiers. All the countries washed by the Po invite me, and promise me battalions of volunteers and arms. The generals of the old army of Eugene at Milan, and those of Piedmont write me word that they are ready to revolt on my approach, and to form under my orders the league of Italian independence. The congress by its acts has dissatisfied all the people on both sides of the Apennines; Genoa is indignant, Venice is humbled, Piedmont—thrown back into the slavery of the priests and nobles, by the superannuated house of Savoy—shudders at the double yoke preparing for it; the Milanese frets impatiently at its ancient slavery under the pro-consuls of Austria, Rome, and its provinces are falling again under the sacerdotal tyranny, which besots while it enchains the people who had been for a moment free."

XXXVI.

It was in vain they represented to him the inequality of his forces against the 800.000 men of the coalition, ready to

flow back upon the Alps, after having annihilated Napoleon; England menacing his coasts, Sicily plotting a counter-revolution even in his own cities, the Calabrese with difficulty kept down by his police, and breaking out in his rear while he should be fighting for the independence of Lower Italy. Nothing, however, could stop him! He had conspired with himself in the seclusion of his own thoughts for the last eight months; his arsenals were full, his treasury sufficient for a campaign, his troops levied, his fortresses prepared, and his generals chosen. Certain of losing all if he waited motionless the execution of the antipathies of Europe, he resolved to risk all; and, as if he had wished to deprive his councillors and his subjects of time for reflection, he declared war the 15th of March, 1815, without even waiting for news of the definitive success of Napoleon, and of his entrance into Paris.

He assumed the command-in-chief of his army, divided into two corps. The first, composed of his guard, under the orders of Generals Pignatelli-Strongoli and Livron, amounted to 12,000 men; the second corps, commanded, under the King himself, by Generals Carascosa, Ambrosio, Lechi, Rosetti, Coletta, and Millet, numbering 30,000 combatants. The first corps advanced upon Rome, demanding a passage from the Pope which he refused. The army continuing, however, to approach the walls, he abandoned Rome and took refuge in Genoa. The King, with the second corps, marched upon Ancona.

On learning the unaccountable movements of the King of Naples, but the coincidence of which with the invasion of France sufficiently indicated their object to the Congress of Vienna, Austria hastened to strengthen with fresh troops its army in Milan, of which the Austrian General Frimont received the command. This army covered by the Eridan soon reckoned 60,000 men, under consummate generals. It extended from Milan to Cesena, while a division under General Nugent covered Tuscany.

XXXVII.

Murat's proclamations to the Italians called them everywhere to the deliverance of their country, and to constitutional

liberty, which he promised them under the protection of his sword. The first collision between him and the Austrians, commanded by Bianchi, took place on the plains of Bologna; and the King of Naples entered a second time triumphant into that city, the focus of Italian genius and liberalism. He advanced from thence upon the Tanaro, a river which runs into the Pô, and which is crossed by a bridge at St. Ambrogio. Whilst the advanced guard of Murat, commanded by Carascosa, was attacking this position, bristling with cannon, and a body of troops had been sent to ford the Tanaro, and turn the flank of the Austrians, Murat himself, carried away by his natural impetuosity, dashed forward with twenty-four dragoons of his guard, into the very midst of the fire, miraculously crossed the bridge without being struck, and rallying his columns to the attack, broke and dispersed the enemy to the right and left. He overtook the flying Austrians at Modena, and seized upon that city, at the same moment that his generals were taking possession of Ferrara. The King of Naples intoxicated with these first successes, magnified by fame, returned in person to enjoy his triumph at Bologna, and to await the first division of his army, commanded by Pignatilli and Livron.

XXXVIII.

The command of this body, which was divided between two generals who did not agree well together, had been lax and uncertain. Instead of hastening their march through Tuscany, to come into a line with the King, they had lost whole days and opportunities of defeating Nugent. They were as if blockaded at Florence, and their immobility deprived Murat of his reserve, of his guard, and of the best troops of his army. His proclamations also, to raise Italy in revolt, produced no corresponding echoes; and neither regiments, volunteers, nor subsidies were sent to his army. No one confided in a Frenchman for the independence of his country. Tyrant for tyrant, they preferred the one who had the best chance of remaining conqueror. Nothing rose in

revolt from the Alps to the Apennines, and even the Tuscans and Modenese joined the Austrians against the Neapolitans.

Murat disconcerted at this, summoned his generals to Bologna, held a council of war with them, accused Italy, acknowledged his situation, and resolved to fall back upon Ancona, to concentrate all his forces nearer to his frontiers and to await a battle instead of continuing to provoke it. In a war of invasion and surprise, such a measure was tantamount to a defeat. He ordered his guard to quit Florence, and to join him on the other side of the Apennines, by Arezzo, and Borgo San Sepolcro, towards Ancona. The King, after some engagements of mingled victory and defeat, arrived at Imola, followed by two Austrian armies, the one commanded by General Neiperg, marched upon the rear of Murat, by the ancient Emilian way, nearer to the Adriatic; the other under the orders of Bianchi, advanced by Florence. These two armies united on the Apennines, numbered together 50,000 men. But Murat was in hopes of fighting them separately, and he had chosen for his battle field the position of Macerata, which he hastened to attain Twenty days march were, however, necessary to enable him to fall back from Bologna with all his divisions upon Macerata; and ability and good fortune enabled him to effect it. Pursued in vain by Neiperg, Murat at length arrived on the 30th of April at Macerata, where he found his guard at the hour and place appointed, and was received by it with acclamations of good omen. This battle, upon a field chosen at such a distance by Murat, was to decide the fate of Italy, which would pass entirely into the hands of the conqueror

XXXIX.

The Neapolitans mustered no more than 25,000 men, but they were masters of the point of junction between the army of Bianchi and the army of Neiperg: they consequently might fight them one after another, or at least prevent them from combining their movements. Murat took upon himself to fight Bianchi in person, with 16,000 of his best troops, and

left Carascosa, his best general, with 11,000 to make head against the army of Neiperg. He accordingly commenced the action with intrepidity, dispersed the advanced corps of Bianchi, and made them fall back as far as Tolentino, where night stopped the victorious columns of Murat. Intoxicated with this first battle, he sent off couriers to the Queen of Naples to announce a victory only half won, and orders to Carascosa to attack Neiperg with confidence.

The morning broke heavily laden with the fogs of spring, which in those valleys resemble the waves and undulations of the sea, completely concealing the landscape from the sight. Bianchi, under favour of the night and of these fogs, had recruited his army unknown to Murat with all his corps dispersed on the preceding evening, and which had not yet rejoined his columns. On the first rending of the foggy curtain by the morning breeze, the King of Naples, on horseback, and ready to pursue his victory, perceived the hills of Tolentino covered and sparkling with 25,000 or 30,000 bayonets; and Bianchi's advanced guard occupying two steep eminences detached from the mountains, and jutting out like a promontory into the plain. Murat was confounded at the sight: he counted sadly the small number of his own troops, repented having detached Carascosa with the rest; but feeling also that any hesitation now would be a confession of inferiority, and that the last hope was in despair, he attacked the advanced posts of Bianchi, which fell back to the mountains. Satisfied with the advantage gained over the Austrians in this first shock, he did not dare to attack with such unequal forces the masses of Bianchi posted on the slope of the mountains. Two hours were passed silent and motionless between these two armies, measuring each other's strength at a distance, and leaving a great interval between them. These were two hours of anguish for the King and his generals; and he had no further hope but in the night, which would enable him to conceal his manœuvres, to rally Carascosa, and to seek for victory, or safety in another position.

XL.

But Bianchi seeing his indecision and his reduced numbers broke at length upon the Neapolitans with all his forces. The shock was terrible, and the melée confused. Murat, in the midst of it, was once more both a king, a general, and a soldier. Directing his battalions, charging with his squadrons, assisting some, rallying others, losing one after another, his bravest aides-de-camp, struck dead by his side, and seeking for death himself, he astonished the Austrians, broke through their squares, destroyed their batteries, drove back their cavalry, and maintaining himself till nightfall upon this field of battle, strewed with 2,000 bodies, he compelled the prudent Bianchi to leave the action undecided, and to fall back upon his positions of the morning, there to take breath and concentrate his forces.

XLI.

The Austrians had scarcely retired from the scene of carnage when Murat despatched orderly upon orderly to Carascosa, directing him to send up fresh troops. Carascosa obeyed, and weakened his own position before Neiperg to strengthen that of his king. A column commanded by General Maio advanced to join Murat, who was hastening to meet it, to address the troops and assign them their post in the next day's battle, when he was met by two couriers just arrived from Naples. One of these announced to the King a general insurrection in the Calabrias, the capital of which was even in possession of the insurgents, displaying the flag of Ferdinand: the other courier acquainted him with the reverses of his army of reserve in the Abruzzi, the taking of the defile of Introdocco by 12,000 Austrians, the defeat and dissolution of the civic guards, the opening of the route to Naples to the enemy through Capua, the dangers of the capital, of the Queen, and his children, and in short the general extremity of the kingdom.

At this news Murat, already beset with the perils of the day, and those of the morrow, felt all his powers crumble

within him. He abandoned a useless struggle upon a foreign ground, while his own states were slipping from under him, and resolved to fly at once to the rescue of his throne and family. He accordingly ordered a retreat, galloped round all the divisions, drew up the columns in order of march, waited for the night, and commanding the rear guard himself he disputed like a hero the defiles of Macerata against the Austrians who were pursuing him. Dismounting from his charger he was several times seen rolling with his sappers under the enemies' bullets, the rocks and trunks of trees with which he barricaded the defile against the cannon and the cavalry of Bianchi. He concluded the night at Macerata, awaiting the remainder of his columns, which he had ordered to meet him in that place.

XLII.

But at daybreak they no longer existed; all the divisions which were not under the king's immediate command, attacked separately by the Austrians, surrounded by Neiperg and Bianchi, crushed by numbers, or disbanding themselves in the panic of a nocturnal retreat, had entirely disappeared. The generals and officers alone remained with Murat, and availed themselves of the early dawn to collect together a few of the scattered remains. Carascosa, who had left Ancona with 6,000 men, rejoined the king, who directed him to march his columns into the Neapolitan States. with orders to rendezvous at and garrison the fortresses of Civita Vecchia and Pescara. He proceeded himself almost alone towards the Abruzzi, to dispute the entrance to his kingdom, with the forces which he still hoped to rally around him there.

During these battles and retreats, everything was falling to pieces at Naples. The Calabrese were advancing towards the capital; the English Commodore Campbell was cruising in the gulf, with a formidable fleet, and threatened to bombard the city and the palace, if the ships and arsenals were not given up to him, to disarm a declared enemy of the allies. The Queen was deliberating with her ministers, under the cannon

of the English; the city was in a state of fermentation. Cardinal Fesch, uncle to Napoleon, and the Princess Pauline Borghese, the Emperor's sister, were flying from the palace and the city. The Queen at length commissioned Prince Cariati to negociate privately with the English admiral the cession of the port and arsenals, on condition that a vessel should be placed at her disposal to embark with her family and her treasures, to go and treat for peace in England.

These conditions being acceded to, the fermentation which had been caused by panic subsided at Naples.

XLIII.

During these disasters, Murat, almost alone, reached by retired roads the royal palace of Caserta. There he learned the insurrection of the garrison of Capua, which had been his last hope: 6,000 men had risen against their officers, had forced the gates, abandoned the city, dispersed themselves about the country, and filled the capital with discouragement and consternation. King Ferdinand was at Messina, waiting only the news of Murat's ruin to cross the Strait and return to the kingdom of his fathers. Transferring the fugitive remains of his army to General Carascosa, he confided the care of negociating a peace, promptly, and at any sacrifice, to him and to General Coletta, commandant of his artillery. "Sacrifice everything," he said, "except your country. I alone will bear the weight of adversity."

Then changing his horse, he galloped towards Naples, where he arrived that night. He ascended the staircase of the palace without being expected, entered the Queen's apartment, and throwing himself into her arms, exclaimed, "All is lost, Madame! Nothing remained for me but death, and I could not find it!" Tears rolled from his eyes as he gazed upon his young wife and children. "No, nothing is lost!" cried the Queen, worthy of her blood by her intrepidity, "since you have preserved your honour, and constancy remains with us in adversity!"

XLIV.

They retired for a few moments together to concert their departure privately by different routes, and the place where they were to meet again. They passed the remainder of the night in conversing with their most faithful friends, and forming conjectures as to the future. The following day Murat issued in disguise from that palace where he had lived happy, and a king, and went alone to the little harbour of Puzzoli, made notorious by the crimes of Nero, and the murder of Agrippina. A fisherman's boat conducted him to the Isle of Ischia, formerly a place of pleasure, but now of the sorrow of separation. The islanders of Ischia did not ill-treat him in his misfortune; they evinced feeling and compassion for him, and gave him for some days a hospitable and safe reception, full of sympathy and respect. The affection which the goodness of his heart had won from the Neapolitans made his departure at once more cruel and more sweet than it would otherwise have been. He was twice beloved, since pity was now added to attachment. He left Ischia for the French coast, on board a merchant vessel freighted by the care of his friends at Naples; and a few adherents, faithful to all his fortunes, followed him through the new and sinister events that awaited him.

XLV.

Whilst Murat was embarking at Ischia, without knowing if he should be received in France by the vengeance or the pardon of Napoleon, the people rose in insurrection under the windows of his deserted palace at Naples. The Queen and her children, accompanied by three faithful ministers, attached in heart, not only to the prosperity but the ruin of this family, Count de Mosbourg, Zatlo, and General Macdonald, took refuge in an English vessel in the port to escape from the insults of the populace. Detained by a tempest in the roadstead under the windows of the palace, they heard across the waves, the acclamations of their capital saluting the entrance of the

Austrians. Sailing at length towards the Adriatic, the vessel which conveyed the Queen of Naples passed that which was taking King Ferdinand to that city. Murat's unfortunate spouse was obliged to quit the deck, and to descend to the cabin to conceal her humiliation, and to avoid witnessing the salutes and honours rendered to the legitimate prince who was on his way to recover his throne.

Such were the events, unforeseen, sudden, and inopportune, which succeeded each other in Italy with the rapidity of thought, unknown to, and contrary to the actual views of Napoleon. These events served as a motive for the declarations of war still suspended, and made the Emperor frequently since exclaim: "It was the destiny of Murat to ruin my cause twice; once by abandoning me, and a second time by declaring for me too soon." Thus even the fidelity that ruins itself did not redeem infidelity. It is duty alone that never mistakes the hour any more than honour does the road.

BOOK TWENTY-SECOND.

Abandonment of Napoleon by France on the news of the Treaty of Vienna —Situation of the Court of Louis XVIII. at Ghent—Arrival of the Count d'Artois and the Duke de Berry—Equivocal conduct of the Duke d'Orleans—Louis XVIII. forms his Council of Government—The favourites of Louis XVIII. and of the Count d'Artois—M. de Blacas — M. de Bruges — M. de la Maisonfort — Counsel of Barras, of Fouché, of M. de Blacas, and of M. de Talleyrand—Hesitation of Louis XVIII.—Discontent of the Court with M. de Blacas—Arrival of M. de Chateaubriand and of M. Guizot at Ghent—Situation of Marmont at the Court—Privy Council of the Count d'Artois—M. de Maubreuil—Fresh indecision of Louis XVIII.—Aspect of the Court at Ghent—Report of M. de Chateaubriand to the King—Intrigues of Fouché in La Vendée—His letter to Fauche-Borel—Insurrection of La Vendée—Landing of Louis de la Rochejaquelin—His Proclamation—He marches on Maulevrier and attacks the Imperial Troops—General Travot surprises and defeats the Vendeans at Aizenay—Entrance of La Rochejaquelin into Chollet—Negociations of Suzannet with Fouché—La Rochejaquelin receives ammunition from the English Fleet—Opposition of La Rochejaquelin to the Negociation—His last struggles—Victory of General Estève—Death of La Rochejaquelin—Action of La Roche-Serviere—Death of Suzannet—Pacification of La Vendée.

I.

As soon as the resolutions of the Congress of Vienna were made known in France, public opinion, until then extremely divided, declared itself everywhere against Napoleon. People perceived with alarm the disastrous consequences of his return, and of the infidelity of the army; and war appeared in all its horrors behind the few days of illusion which the partisans of the Emperor, and the Emperor himself, had given to France to lull the spirit of the country. Such was the perspective held

out to all thinking men; a second general war, the defeats of which would be the partition, and its victories the exhaustion of the nation, while either of these contingencies must give place to a despotism more rude and implacable than the first. From that moment public opinion became more openly adverse to Napoleon; the country being on one side, and the army and the imperial court on the other. The separation was complete. The people, sometimes agitated by the republicans, sometimes by the despair of patriotism, wavered between both; while men of ambition, of intellect, and of foresight no longer hesitated in a timely desertion of a desperate cause, in pronouncing as loudly as safety permitted against Napoleon, in publicly regretting the legal, constitutional, and pacific reign which had been interrupted by so much treason and violence, and in turning their thoughts, their looks, and their steps towards the court of Ghent. There were then in reality two governments, the one at the Tuileries, the other in Belgium; the first represented Bonapartism and the army; the second Europe and the dominant opinion of France.

II.

Up to that period Louis XVIII. had remained in solitude in the private house which he inhabited at Ghent; but the declaration of the congress, communicated to him by M. de Talleyrand, supplied him with a court, the nucleus of an army, and the shadow of a government. The roads of Belgium were covered with the royal guards, officers of the King's military household, Vendean chiefs, ministers, publicists, writers, diplomatists, secret emissaries, officious counsellors, young and old partisans of the royal cause, going to offer their devotion, their arms, their swords, their pens, their counsel; and to surround this fortune which, though fallen in appearance, all foresaw would shortly rise again. Every one wished, at little risk, to take the part of misfortune for some months, to acquire a claim to share the prosperity of a long reign; and the exiled court thus comprised a greater crowd, more assiduity, and more illustrious names than the suspected one of the Tuileries. An odour of contagion and

catastrophe was spread through the palace of the Emperor, while hope and future prospects were with the King.

III.

The Count d'Artois and the Duke de Berry had also rejoined the King at Ghent, where they inhabited a hotel in the principal square of the city, near the residence of Louis XVIII. The Duke de Berry was commander-in-chief of the body of guards, of soldiers of all arms, and of volunteers, increasing every day, which formed the army of the King, and which already numbered three or four thousand men, cantoned at Alost. The Duke d'Angoulême had remained in Spain, to be within reach of Bordeaux, whither he was recalled by so many loyal hearts; the Duchess d'Angoulême had hastened from London to Belgium, and the Prince de Condé was at Brussels. The Duke d'Orleans alone affected to remain in England, and his absence was remarked.

This prince on quitting Lille had closely adhered to the ambiguous prudence which had inspired his words and actions since the Restoration, and preserved a nice balance between his family and the future contingencies which he reserved for himself or for his house. He had written a farewell letter to the army, through Marshal Mortier, in which he said, "I am too good a Frenchman to sacrifice the interests of France; and since I am forced to quit it by new misfortunes, I go to bury myself in solitude and oblivion. I release you from the orders that I had sent to you, and I entreat you to do all that your excellent judgment and pure patriotism will suggest to you as best for the interests of France."

This letter, in which one of the first princes of the blood seemed to detach himself from the cause of the chief of his house, and to retire into oblivion instead of rallying round the King, had greatly hurt Louis XVIII. and the royal family. It was known that at Lille, as at Paris, the Duke d'Orleans had too openly separated his cause from that of the reigning family. "Behold the end of the elder branch," said a superior officer of the army to him. "Bonaparte will soon be put down,

and the people will naturally seek you out. Do not place between yourself and the nation services against France in the armies now about to act; retire from the scene and leave the rest to time."

These words seem to have traced out the conduct of the prince; but Europe was no less astonished than the King at his suspicious attitude. The Duke d'Orleans, informed of the general disapprobation of his policy, wished to exonerate himself in a letter to the Duke of Wellington, in which he sought to justify his reserve. "I differ greatly with your highness," frankly replied the Duke, "as to the manner in which the King ought to conduct himself. Assuredly he ought to put himself forward in a cause wherein he is more concerned than any one else. I understand the motives which keep you at a distance from the court of Ghent; but if the people come forward you will certainly consider it your duty to place yourself at the service of the King."

The Duke d'Orleans appeared to be the most distinguished of all the princes of his house by Bonaparte, and intentionally favoured by the Emperor, whether to appear generous, or by his favours even to sow suspicion and discord in the house of Bourbon. The Duchess d Orleans, his mother, an inoffensive princess without political influence, had received, from Napoleon, permission to reside in France, and an annual indemnity of 300,000 francs. The Duchess of Bourbon, sister of the Duke d'Orleans, had received the same permission, and a pension nearly equal from her forfeited estates. These exceptions in favour of the house of Orleans made them believe at Ghent and Vienna that there was a mutual understanding between Napoleon and the Duke d'Orleans. No such understanding, however, existed; but the attitude of the prince cast a suspicion on his prospective designs: he evidently reserved himself for all future contingencies.

IV.

On his arrival at Ghent, the only minister of Louis XVIII. was M. de Blacas, a favourite dreaded by France,

suspected by Europe, unjustly responsible in the eyes of all, except those of the King, for the faults and short-sightedness which had dethroned his sovereign; he was, in short, the man of all others, the best calculated to render unpopular even the exile and misfortunes of the King. Faithful, exact, punctual, assiduous, the very shadow of his master, a man more qualified by nature and education for the royal household services of the middle ages than for the political councils of the new era: careless of pleasing any one but the King, silent, haughty, with a disdainful exterior, and all the more proud of his birth for belonging to one of those old but not illustrious families whose only aristocracy is in their antiquity: of a matured intelligence in narrow doctrines, despising the revolution and denying it, instead of understanding and fearing it; infatuated with the past, a rebel to the present, closed to the future, no one seemed more certainly predestined to the hatred at once of the courtiers and the people. He redeemed his faults, however, by an unbounded attachment to royalty and to the King.

V.

If M. de Blacas had had a proper discrimination of men and things, he would not have hesitated a moment in giving up the ministry on quitting France, and contenting himself with the part of a friend near the person of the King. He could not be ignorant that the whole world attributed to his improvidence the return of Napoleon, and that his retirement would have given satisfaction to the public feeling.

But the soul of M. de Blacas possessed disdain sufficient to brave all opinions, and obstinacy enough not to descend, even when the throne which buoyed him up was itself cast down. He therefore remained, and the King, who reposed entire confidence in nobody but him, proudly opposed him to Europe and his own court: it was a challenge for his pride and a habit for his friendship. He yielded nothing to the general cry which arose, even in his house and family, against M. de Blacas. The King, deprived of the springs of govern-

ment, never had greater occasion for that mysterious police, and that hand that mingled in all the intrigues of parties and of courts, which had been his only system of government during twenty years. M. de Blacas held for him all the strings of this machinery; he was the bait for all those adventurers who scent out lost causes to sell them useless services. This police, which the ministers of Bonaparte had incessantly watched, and in which they always had double accomplices, had cost the King considerable sums, and had sold him nothing but illusions and falsehoods. M de Blacas managed the springs of it with an upright but unskilful hand. intrigue was not his besetting sin, but pride, that pride which was pliant under one sole master to elevate itself more majestically before a court.

VI.

The King, however, in spite of his unlimited attachment to M. de Blacas, was compelled to humour M de Talleyrand, his minister of foreign affairs and his negociator with Europe. The fate of his dynasty was still in the hands of M. de Talleyrand, and with one word at Vienna he could ruin or save it. To inspire M. de Talleyrand with confidence, the King, some days after his arrival at Ghent, appointed M. de Jaucourt, the intimate friend and private confidant of this diplomatist, minister, *ad interim*, of foreign affairs. Clarke was appointed minister of war; the Abbé Louis, also devoted to M de Talleyrand, minister of finance, Beugnot, minister of marine; Beurnonville and Lally Tollendal, ministers of state; Chateaubriand, ambassador to Sweden, a vain title which sufficed to give him simply the right to take his place at court and to have a voice in its political transactions. Such was the administration with which the King surrounded himself, to have an appearance of once more governing from the centre of his isolation, and morally to represent an ideal reign.

The Count d'Artois had at Ghent, in the Count de Bruges, what the King had in M. de Blacas, a friend, a favourite, and a chief of his council. These two men felt the necessity of

understandihg one another, and of concerting frequently amongst themselves, in order to maintain harmony between the King and his family, and thus to preserve their own supremacy, which would be compromised by an open rivalship. M. de Bruges had less of court instinct and more political sense than M. de Blacas. He was less scrupulous in his opinions, less infatuated with the old regime, and he was also less repugnant to borrow from the revolution both counsel and agents, to learn from them to corrupt and to crush it.

M de Blacas had for his confidants M. de Pradel, an honest man, to whom he confided all the domestic arrangements of the palace, and the Marquis de Maisonfort, one of those wrecks of the emigration who had passed their lives in vicissitudes, in pleasures, and in the adventures of camps, of courts, and of conspiracies.

Formed by nature like Rivarol, or D'Entragues, the Marquis de Maisonfort drew up with facility and talent manifestos to France or the allied powers, for the wandering court of Mittau or of Hartwell, flew from Petersburg to London, charged with missions by M. de Blacas or the King, connected himself with the ministers and ambassadors of the allied powers, affected to have important relations in France with the chiefs of parties, allowed others to persuade him, or persuaded himself, of the pretended complicity of Barras, or of Fouché, with the royalists, perpetually contrived plots for a restoration, often imaginary, believing, or feigning to believe, that he held the strings of them in his hands; an active negociator of this officious diplomacy, expert in over-exciting and nourishing hope in the minds of M. de Blacas and the King, believing little in them himself, but thus creating and maintaining a certain importance in the foreign cabinets, in London, and at the court of Hartwell, where he was known as an agent, or an active confidant of the future Restoration. He was above all, a ready and intelligent writer, of a lively and amiable disposition; a revived vestige, in short, of the literature and sceptical philosophy of the court of Louis XV., but who knew on occasion to borrow from Burke or from Pitt, the severe maxims and appearance of high political philosophy. He had become

intimate at St. Petersburg with the Count de Maistre, the Sardinian minister in Russia, a sort of political prophet, paradoxical, absolute, strange, but sincere, whose wild and retrograde genius furnished opinions ready made to all who wished to affect profundity amidst their frivolity. Such was the Marquis de Maisonfort, one of the most agreeable, most fascinating, but most variable men that nature, ambition, and literature could have formed to amuse and entertain a wandering court.

VII.

We have stated that Barras and Fouché, two amnestied regicides, desirous of adding the favour of the restoration to their amnesty, had both offered their counsel and services to the King, prior to the landing of Bonaparte at Cannes. Barras, who belonged to an ancient family of Provence, was connected by family ties with M. de Blacas, which had facilitated an interview between these two personages in the interest of the King, on which occasion Barras had given tardy counsel which was communicated to his Majesty by M. de Blacas. M. de Talleyrand, however, had advised the King in a letter from Vienna to listen rather to Fouché, whose experience, more recent and more consummate in Bonapartist intrigues, could better aid him in defeating them; but Fouché had been set aside by M. de Blacas and by the counsels of Barras, and nourished a lively resentment in consequence. Fouché had thereupon addressed himself to the Count d'Artois, with whom he had had a conference before his departure from Paris; and having become Napoleon's minister since his return, great hopes were entertained of his co-operation by the court of Ghent.

But amongst the number of visitors who besieged this court, two distinct and envenomed parties were formed; the one supporting M. de Blacas, the other sold to M. de Talleyrand and to Fouché. This minister, under the pretext of enlightening the cabinet of the Tuileries on the manœuvres of the coalition, maintained numerous agents at Ghent, at Brussels, and in London. A Bonapartist, in Paris; a Royalist, in

Belgium; Fouché's agents endeavoured to convince the King of the good dispositions of their master for his cause; they were further accredited by the agents of M. de Talleyrand, who counselled the King to confide in the ability and interest of Fouché.

M. de Blacas and his party advised a contrary course; for they distrusted M. de Talleyrand as much as the minister of Napoleon. They told the King that Fouché and Talleyrand were playing a triple part; that they would serve Napoleon until the moment when victory should declare against him; that they were lulling the court of Ghent with false hopes; but that they had in view the Duke d'Orleans, at that time a refugee in London; that their agents conveyed intelligence of what was passing to this ambitious and reserved prince, and that hidden negociations were on foot between Fouché, Talleyrand, Pozzo di Borgo, and Sir Charles Stuart, the English ambassador at Vienna, to place the Duke d'Orleans on the throne shortly to be wrested from Bonaparte. Louis XVIII., very clear-sighted in everything that threatened his throne, distrusted the Duke d'Orleans, and saw with inquietude a pretension to the crown in his affectation of retirement, and his isolation in London. Nor was he without suspicion of M. de Talleyrand; but he felt the necessity of managing a minister who had been so useful to him at Vienna, and who might be driven by ingratitude into the ranks of the enemy. He wavered between events and opinions without listening to the murmurs of his little court.

VIII.

The exasperation of this court was unanimous against M. de Blacas and M. de Bruges, the two favourites leagued together at the moment. This discontent was increased every day by the arrival of new men from Paris, emissaries of different opinions, who had shared amongst them the royal influence in 1814, and who came to court it again in exile.

These were M. de Chateaubriand, who, supported by the Duke Matthew de Montmorency, whose patronage he then

sought, pretended to absorb in the eclat of his talents the influence of familiarity and custom: he was, however, treated more as a poet than a statesman. The foreign ministers, the courtiers, and the men of business avenged themselves for the superiority of his genius by consigning him to the glory of literature. M. Bertin, sen., the friend of M. de Chateaubriand, a clear-sighted man, with a penetrating judgment, well trained by a long connection with the press, brought to the King that rare tact in the appreciation of public opinion which is the sense of constitutional policy. M. de Lally-Tollendal, a public orator, more noisy than eloquent, formerly indebted for his great success to the general sympathy for a son pleading for his father, afterwards the friend of M. Necker, then an emigrant, always on the scene, of a theatrical disposition, more capable of effect than action. M. Guizot, since become celebrated by literature, by eloquence, by success, and by public catastrophes: whose aptitude for business had been discovered, and devoted to the public service in the home-office by the Abbé de Montesquiou, in 1814. After Bonaparte's return M. Guizot had continued to be employed; but whether he had at the first moment undervalued the event of the 20th March, or whether he supposed that public opinion, taken by surprise, would not long bear a second Empire, and that future success was to be sought for at Ghent, he had not delayed in going thither, charged, as he said, with a confidential mission from M. de Montesquiou, M. Royer-Collard, and from some men of the philosophical parties of Paris, to counsel the King to liberal programmes, more powerful than the armies of Napoleon. He wrote under M. Bertin, in the *Moniteur de Gand*, as well as M. Lally-Tollendal, M. de Chateaubriand, and M. Roux-Laborie, the most intermeddling spirit of the time. He was attached in friendship and opinion at Ghent, with M. Mounier, son of the old president of the National Assembly, a young genius of the highest and most upright class, and also with M. Anglès, prefect of police. M. Guizot was seized at that epoch with an ardour of ambition which outstripped his fame, and with a confidence in himself which was the faith of his merit. M. de Blacas regarded him with suspicion. "What is this young man come here to do?"

he said to the commissary-general of police of the King of the Netherlands, charged with superintending the residence of Louis XVIII. "He has had I know not what secret mission to the King; he swore allegiance to Napoleon after our departure from Paris, but Carnot did not wish to have him in his ministry; it is not therefore fidelity but necessity which has brought him to us." The King, prejudiced by M. de Blacas, avoided him because he knew him to be connected with the Abbé Louis, M. de Jaucourt, and all the party of M. de Talleyrand. The Count d'Artois repulsed him, because he thought he was attached to M. Royer-Collard, in whom this prince would never recognise anything but a Jansenist and a conspirator.

IX.

Marshal Marmont had followed the King to Ghent, and continued to command there, under the Duke de Berry, the handful of faithful troops that remained. He did not mix himself up with any of the parties which divided the court, but lived in a state of isolation and mourning, which attested the misery of his situation. Nobody looked upon him as a traitor; but all regarded him as a man who had been sacrificed by a false position. He shed tears of grief and indignation at every public reproach which Napoleon launched against him in Europe, in his speeches and proclamations to his soldiers. These unmerited but specious accusations of treason were a perpetual torture to him; and by the despair they occasioned him it was apparent how they agitated his soul, and that his attachment for his old chief had never been stifled in his heart. He was considered rather as a victim than an accomplice in events beyond his control, and he was pitied accordingly.

The friends of M. de Talleyrand, and M. de Talleyrand himself, on the contrary, bore without emotion the accusations and invectives of Bonaparte. They took credit to themselves as political men for his imprecations, measuring by the hatred they inspired the mischief they had done to an avowed enemy. The King treated Marmont with regard, Count d'Artois openly preferred Marshal Soult to him, in spite of the unjust accusations

of treason which the royalists of his court uttered against him; and was convinced that Soult never had betrayed. At Ghent the wavering disposition of Marshal Ney, who commanded at Lille, was much talked of. This marshal, it was known, affected more and more to repudiate all suspicion of connivance with the Emperor prior to his unaccountable defection. He loudly exclaimed that he only saw in Napoleon a chief useful in the military defence of the country, but that his opinions and his souvenirs were all on the side of the republic. He was considered at Ghent as a man crushed by circumstances beyond his mental powers, who endeavoured to justify in his own eyes a weakness by an inconsistency, and who would involuntarily serve a cause badly which he had badly embraced.

X.

The privy council of the Count d'Artois was composed, under M. de Bruges, of M. de Vaublanc, and of M. Capelle, two men of the Empire, who had passed over the year before to the conquering party of the royalists, and after the 20th March had remained faithful to the vanquished. An old member of the deliberative assemblies, known by an emphatic eloquence and a courage equal to circumstances, having followed all the oscillations of the Revolution, but without ever having overstepped the limits of justice and honesty, proscribed in 1793, returned after the proscriptions, attached from convictions of monarchical order and by favours to Bonaparte, under whose reign he was a long time prefect; such was M. de Vaublanc, who now aspired to merit under the Bourbons a more elevated rank than that which he had occupied under the Empire. He was confident in his eloquence and in his aptitude for government, and had inspired the Count de Bruges, and through him the Count d'Artois, with the same faith which he had in himself. He promised the prince to subjugate the chambers by his eloquence, and the opposition by his resolution. He incited him against the incapacity of M. de Blacas, and the immorality of M. de Talleyrand. Neglected by the former, disdained and railed at by the friends of the latter,

looked upon by the new men as a weak mind, inflated with his own importance, M. de Vaublanc had at that time only a silent and subordinate influence. He had recommended to the Count d'Artois another counsellor, issuing like himself from the ranks of the imperial administration, and who was beginning to assume an ascendancy over this prince which has since been fatal.

This was M. Capelle, formerly prefect of Florence and of Geneva under Napoleon, and the favourite of his sister, Eliza Bacciochi, Grand Duchess of Tuscany; a man whose obscure beginning nobody knew, still young, of a remarkable beauty, and much finesse under the cover of simplicity, calculated to serve well in the second rank, and not being ambitious of the first, safe and zealous in his attachments, honest and faithful in his opinions. The Count de Bruges favoured the increasing influence of these two men with his master, because he did not believe that this influence would ever rise sufficiently high to clash with his own, deeming them good for service, but incapable of command. Roux-Laborie, one of the founders of the *Journal des Debats*, and one of the most active agents of M. de Talleyrand in 1814, had quitted this party and agitated at present in that of the Count d'Artois. Each fluctuated from one prince to the other, according to his conjectures, or his predilections. This little city, therefore, displayed all the cabals, all the vicissitudes, and all the inconstancies of great courts. All seemed to have a presentiment that favour at Ghent would be fortune in Paris.

XI.

Spies and adventurers of every description swarmed there, and people saw with alarm the arrival, amongst the rest, of a man whose sinister name had inspired even Napoleon at Fontainebleau with terror, and whose presence at Ghent now also infused the same feeling into the souls of the princes. This was the Count de Maubreuil, a gentleman from Britany of high birth, whose life was covered with suspicion, whose mind was corrupted, and whose arm it was thought might be purchased even for acts of criminality. He had

been page to the Queen of Westphalia, the sister-in-law of Napoleon, and wife of Jerome Bonaparte. Whether impelled by misery, or resentment for insolent love repulsed by this virtuous lady, Maubreuil, with some adventurers, his accomplices, had stopt the Queen of Westphalia, when a fugitive in the month of March, 1814, on the route from Fontainebleau, and had carried off her gold and jewels under pretence of restoring them to the treasury of the crown. He had, in fact, orders from the provisional government and from the allies, who placed at his disposition the military force of the places where he should require them. Having returned to Paris, and being pursued by public indignation for this misdeed, Maubreuil pretended that he had received from Roux-Laborie, the confidant of M. de Talleyrand, and from M. de Talleyrand himself, a mission to carry off Napoleon by force, and public rumour added the further mission of eventually making away with the Emperor. The enemies of the Bourbons had adopted this odious and groundless version. The Emperor and his friends affected to believe in the intended assassination, and to impute to the princes and their ministers the boastings of this adventurer. The King and the Count d'Artois spoke of this man and his pretended revelations with the contempt due to calumny: the assassination of an enemy had never stained their councils. On the contrary, they were fearful that this man, whose turbulent and suspicious royalism dishonoured their cause, was an instrument at Ghent of some plot against their own lives. Roux-Laborie, who had had, in fact, some connexion with Maubreuil, in seizing the treasure of the Queen of Westphalia, who, it was thought, was carrying away the crown diamonds, trembled at the vengeance of Maubreuil, who was, however, speedily removed from the residence of the King.

XII.

M. de la Rochejaquelin, commanding the horse grenadiers of the King's guard, with a heroic name, a martial figure, a Vendéan soul, and the offspring of a race eager to shed their blood in the cause of their kings, recoiled, in spite of his

courage, from renewing the horrors of civil war in his province. He resisted from patriotic motives the mad entreaties which the fanatics of the two courts made to him to quit his regiment in which he was adored, and to proceed to La Vendée. He yielded at length, less from conviction than a sense of honour, and departed with remorse and a presentiment of a fruitless death. The foreign ambassadors, and amongst others the Count de Goltz, ambassador from Prussia, were highly indignant at his tardiness. Civil war, according to them, ought to precede and be the pretext of foreign war.

The foreign ministers were equally divided with the courtiers of the exiled court; but all agreed in their contempt for the emigration, which had not known, they said, either to win the affections of, or to govern the new country. M. de Blacas in their eyes made the King unpopular, and M. de Bruges the Count d'Artois. They had a leaning for the new men: M. de Richelieu, M. de Montesquiou, M. Mounier, M. Guizot, M. Anglès, who appeared, at least, to understand the feeling of regenerated France. England and Austria declared for M. de Talleyrand, and counselled the King to give himself up entirely to his sagacity. Russia and Prussia already preferred to him the Duke de Richelieu, whose name, independence, impartiality and probity rendered him in their eyes the man calculated to restore constitutional monarchy in France. M. de Talleyrand had become odious and suspicious to them, since the secret treaty he had effected at Vienna, between France, Austria, and England.

This league of the south gave some disquietude to the north. Baron de Vincent, the Austrian ambassador, and Sir Charles Stuart, the English ambassador at Ghent, pushed the King with all their efforts towards M. de Talleyrand. England meditated a ministry in which the Duke de Richelieu, who would answer for the Revolution, should be associated with M. de Talleyrand, who would answer for the alliance with England. Such were the agitations and indecisions of political affairs at Ghent, when the Duke de Richelieu arrived there himself, sent by the Emperor Alexander to counterbalance the ascendancy of the friends of M. de Talleyrand.

But although he had surrounded the King with his personal friends M. de Talleyrand did not yet venture to go to Ghent. He was kept away from it purposely that his presence might not occasion between him and M. de Blacas a dissension fatal to their common cause. When he arrived at Brussels M. de Talleyrand was not even allowed to occupy the empty hotel which the court had in that city adjacent to Ghent. He took offence at this unhandsome reception, which, he said, discredited him with the allied powers, and he made but a tardy and a rare appearance at court.

As for the Duke de Richelieu, modest, without ambition, having rather a repugnance to than a taste for public affairs, exiled for twenty years from his country, nationalized in Russia, the founder, governor, and creator of Odessa, more a soldier than a politician, he aspired to nothing further than to see the house of Bourbon consolidated in France upon institutions conformable to the genius of the age, and then to return to the desert. The sentiment alone of the services which the house of Bourbon could claim from him, and the imperative orders of the Emperor of Russia retained him at Ghent. A conformity of character and rectitude of mind attached him from the beginning with M. Mounier, a man of the same stamp, more happy at being useful than eager to command.

XIII.

In his private life, at Ghent, the King displayed the same superiority over fortune that he had shown at Verona, at Mittau, at Hartwell, and at the Tuileries. Age and infirmities, which double the dangers of flight and the asperities of exile, did not appear to affect his serenity. He felt so confident of his right that he threw back upon adversity all the wrongs of his situation: he reigned in all places to which he bore his name and his blood, and nothing was altered in his habits except the palace. The Abbé Louis, his minister of finance, had brought with him several millions of his civil list, which sufficed for the maintenance of his household, and the payment of his troops, for some months. He had neither

luxury nor indigence: he continued all his habits of devotion, of family, of councils, of carriage drives, with the regularity of hours and etiquette with which at all times he felt pleased to encircle his life. As at Paris, he stole some hours from public affairs to consecrate them to familiar conversation, and to learned, and literary pursuits. He wrote, and he enjoyed friendship. He felt that Europe was agitating itself for him, he therefore hastened none of his movements through impatience for the recovery of his throne. He received with grace and freedom of intellect the numerous guests who hastened from all parts of France to offer him their services or their fidelity. He saw the foreign ministers every day, and listened with curiosity to the police reports which were made to him on the remarkable or suspicious strangers who arrived at his court. He loved, above all things, to converse on these matters, or on literary and scientific subjects with Baron d'Eckstein, charged by the allies with the functions of provisional minister of police at Ghent. He enjoyed the society of this young officer, a Dane by birth, a Frenchman by taste, since celebrated in science and letters, whose conversation nourished his love for high literature. He took him to France after the second restoration, and nationalised him by attaching him to the ministry of foreign affairs.

XIV.

The Count d'Artois was more disquiet, and supported with less impassibility the languor of forced inaction. This prince, too much flattered in his youth, required always to be so by favourites, who exaggerated to him his superiority over his brother. He liked always to have a political circle of his own, and, so to speak, to reign in advance. Thence arose, in foreign countries as at Paris, his perpetual agitation, his silent, or boisterous opposition, his private cabinet, rarely in accordance with that of the King, the focus of a thousand ambitions and a thousand intrigues, and a certain source of embarrassment in a constitutional government, where the prince who governs has two oppositions to satisfy instead of one;

incapable, however, of any disloyalty, though capable of many imprudences.

Meanwhile the Duke de Berry was forming himself for command, inspecting the troops, and roughly scolding the last comers, such as Bourmont, Clouet, and others, who rejoined their colours at the last moment. He lived in familiar intercourse with the young nobility in this new army of Condé, and gave himself up to the thoughtless pleasures of his age, as a future Charles II. of France. He refrained from politics, for fear of displeasing his uncle, by taking a part between him and the Count d'Artois. Time passed in this manner, in expectation either of the clash of European armies advancing upon the French frontiers, or of an actual and spontaneous explosion of France against Napoleon and the army, or else of an insurrection in La Vendée, whose chiefs arrived hourly to solicit La Rochejaquelin to give the signal to his peasants.

XV.

The only occupation of the court at this moment was to negociate with the allied powers, to treat with those characters at Paris who offered themselves to corruption, and to appeal to public opinion by proclamations in which the King from a distance laid open his heart to his people. It was also deemed necessary to combat the proclamations and state papers of Napoleon, published in the *Moniteur* at Paris, and to appeal daily to the hearts and understandings of the French people, astonished and already repenting their weakness and improvidence.

It was for this royalist propagandism that the *Moniteur de Gand* was created, a war journal, conducted by Messrs. de Chateaubriand, Bertin, Lally-Tollendal, Beugnot, and frequently inspired by the King himself. M. de Chateaubriand, but little liked by Louis XVIII., who dreaded ambition and resistance where he knew the strength and splendour of genius to exist, still, however, held the pen of the council. Invested during some weeks with the ministry of the interior, in the absence of M. de Montesquiou, he drew up in that character a

report to the King, intended to offer to France and to Europe a true picture of facts and opinions which were travestied by the proclamations and by the venal journals of Paris. This report was the manifesto at once of the King and of the people, accusing one man alone and his army for the calamities of the world.

"Sire!" said M. de Chateaubriand, "Bonaparte placed, by a strange fatality, between the coasts of France and Italy, has descended like Genseric, *there where he was called by the vengeance of God.* The hope of all who had committed, and of all who had meditated a crime, he came and he succeeded; men loaded with your gifts, their breasts decorated with your orders, kissed in the morning that royal hand which in the evening they betrayed. Further than this, Sire, the last triumph which crowns, and which will terminate the career of Bonaparte, has nothing marvellous in it. It is not a real revolution, but a passing invasion. There is no real alteration in France; public opinion there has undergone no change. What we see is not the inevitable result of a long chain of causes and effects. The King has retired for a moment; but the monarchy remains intact. The nation, as witness its tears and its regrets, has shown that it has separated itself from the armed power which imposed upon it laws.

"These sudden reverses are frequent amongst all nations which have had the frightful misfortune to fall under military despotism. The histories of the Lower Empire, of the Ottoman Empire, of modern Egypt, and the regencies of barbarian states are full of them. Every day at Cairo, at Algiers, or at Tunis a proscribed Bey reappears on the frontier of the desert; some Mamelukes join him, proclaim him their chief and master. The despot advances amidst the clanking of chains, enters the capital of his empire, triumphs and dies. You appeared, Sire, and the foreigner retired. Bonaparte returns, and the foreigner re-enters our unfortunate country. Under your reign the dead reposed in their graves, and children were restored to their families; under his we shall again see sons torn from their mothers, and the bones of Frenchmen dispersed in the fields; you bear them happiness, he brings them back destruction.

"You have built up all, and Bonaparte has cast all down. Your laws abolished conscription and confiscation, they did not allow of banishment, or arbitrary imprisonment; the right of levying the contributions they left to the representatives of the people; and they assured with equal rights civil and political liberty to all men. Bonaparte appears and the conscription recommences, and property is violated. The Chambers of Peers and of Deputies are dissolved; taxation is changed, modified, and altered in its nature by the will of one man; the favours granted to the defenders of the country are recalled, or at least contested; your civil and military household is condemned. The tyrant thus seizes, one by one, the victims to whom he promised forgiveness and repose in his first proclamations. Already we can count numerous sequestrations, arrests, exiles, and laws of banishment. Thirteen victims are numbered on one list of death. Sire, you yourself are proscribed, you and the descendants of Henri IV. and the daughter of Louis XVI! You cannot at this moment, without incurring the risk of your life, put your foot on that soil where you dried up so many tears, where you restored so many children to their parents, where you did not shed one drop of blood, and to which you restored peace and liberty! When your Majesty, after twenty-three years of misfortune, reascended the throne of your ancestors, you found in your presence the judges of your brother: and these judges still live; and you have preserved to them the rights of citizens! And it is they who now issue against your sacred person, against your august family, against your faithful servants, sentences of death and of proscription! And all these acts, in which violence, injustice, and hypocrisy vie with ingratitude, are done in the name of liberty!

"The new government of France, employing the most odious means, has made a search for letters, and in a secret drawer of one of your ministers, some have been found which were to have revealed important secrets. Well! what have the public learnt from these confidential, unknown, and hidden letters, which they have been ill-advised enough to publish? They have learnt that your ministers, differing amongst themselves

on some details, were all of one accord in the main, that they thought no one could reign in France except by the charter and with the charter; and that the French, loving and wishing for liberty, it was necessary to comply with the manners and opinions of the age. Yes, Sire! and this is the fitting occasion to make a solemn protestation of the fact: all your ministers, all the members of your council are inviolably attached to the principles of a wise liberty. Let it be permitted us to proclaim with the profound and unlimited respect which we bear to your crown and to your virtues: we are ready to shed for you the last drop of our blood, to follow you to the confines of the earth, to share with you the tribulations it may please the Almighty to send you, because we believe, before God, that you will maintain the constitution that you have given to your people, that the most sincere wish of your royal heart is for the liberty of the French. If it had been otherwise, Sire, we should all have died at your feet, in defence of your sacred person, because you are our lord and master, the king of our forefathers, our legitimate sovereign; but, Sire, we should have been nothing more than your soldiers; we should have ceased to be your counsellors and your ministers."

XVI.

These manifestos were spread throughout France from hand to hand, by the natural propagandism of the royalist populations, and by the facility which Fouché's police afforded to their circulation for the advancement of agitation. These parties in full cry increased his importance, as one or other of them prepared results which he wished to hold in hand. They gave a great impetus to public opinion; for truths of this nature are never laid before a nation with impunity. Napoleon with his army appeared isolated in the midst of Europe: all these just accusations fell upon him and his troops with greater force than the bullets of the coalition. This was not yet enough for the court of Ghent and for Fouché: one wished to act, the other was only desirous of agitating public opinion. The impatience of the royalists and the agitating policy of Fouché

agreed, without previous concert, in the project of raising La Vendée.

This minister revealed to one of his superior agents in these provinces his private thoughts, veiling them, however, with the mask of patriotism, in the event of the Emperor's defeat. "The object is not," Fouché dared to write to Fauche-Borel, "solely to arm the populace against each other; that would lead to nothing. What is necessary is, in case of the fall of that which now exists, that they should be ready on foot to impart to the true principles of the revolution the aid which the Emperor is powerless to realise, and which the King of Ghent, in spite of his finesse, will never dare to consecrate. La Vendée must not again become terrible, but it will do no harm to show itself ready on some points to repel force by force. From this shock, which will only produce concussions, but never an insurrection, will necessarily spring the progressive weakening of both the hostile parties: we shall then be more at our ease in producing an order of things more conformable to our wishes. The Duke d'Orleans is a medium of compounding between the extremes; Dumouriez thought of him long since. Europe is arming against the Emperor, and he must inevitably fall; he is already doomed. The elder branch offers no security to the revolutionary interests; we must therefore look elsewhere. The Duke d'Orleans is well disposed, and will accept the crown on such conditions as may be imposed upon him; he has ambition, and his antecedents are perfect: therefore work La Vendée, disquiet it, but never take final measures; let us never burn our vessels either in one camp or the other. There are hatreds at the bottom of all hearts, make them vibrate in words, but never in actions, if possible; 'tis the most certain means of weakening and killing them. Tire out the soldiers by aimless marches; demoralise the generals; procure intelligence amongst the Vendéan officers; favour the departure of those who wish to go sentimentally to Ghent. Speak well of me, as one whose mind is weaned from the errors of the *sans-culottes*, frankly accepting the monarchy, and esteeming the royalists: say that I have numerous friends amongst them, but, above all, by every

possible means, prevent the west from having recourse to insurrection. The combined armies of Anjou, of Poitou, of Britany and of Maine might march on Paris, when the Emperor is no longer there, and by a bold *coup de main* change our best concerted plans. Such a hypothesis may present impossibilities, but in a revolution everything must be foreseen, and I do not wish to have arrived at this period of it to find myself totally vanquished by some imbecile peasants. Partial war, then, if it must be so; but war between village and village, and between town and town, but never between army and army. Risings every where, but insurrection no where, and above all, suffer no general to obtain such an empire over the minds of the Vendéans as may prove fatal to the consequences which I hope to deduce from all this confusion. Come to an understanding with Lagarde, who has the prefecture of Mans, and possesses all my confidence."

XVII.

These insinuations of Fouché favoured the anarchical insurrections in these provinces; but they gave them undecisive results, which could not respond to the passions, to the devotion, or to the interest of the royalists. Civil wars do not admit of either these indecisions or this abeyance: La Vendée could only arise under its real chiefs and under its ancient banner; it hated the name of Orleans, the accomplice, in its eyes, in the murder of Louis XVI., more than the name of Bonaparte, which had restored to it nationality, religion, and glory. The great majority of its bravest chiefs, such as La Rochejaquelin and Bourmont, had served in the great campaigns of the Empire. One name alone was dearer to the hearts of the Vendéans than that of Bonaparte, and that was the name of the Bourbons.

We have seen that the rapidity of Bonaparte's march on Paris, the surprise of the chiefs, and the indecision of the princes, had disconcerted on the 20th of March, the attempt of the Duke de Bourbon to raise the west of France in insurrection. But the thought of this insurrection was not dead

either in the hearts of the western chiefs, or in the heart of the King at Ghent, where it was every day fomented by the foreign ambassadors. La Rochejaquelin was the man designated, above all others, by his name and by his courage, to give the signal, the enthusiasm, and the victory to a country filled with the memory and bedewed with the blood of his family. The great Vendéan war, from 1793 to 1799, had elevated the names of La Rochejaquelin and of Charette into the war-cry of La Vendée. It was a family which, by a community of sacrifices, of heroism, and of bloodshed in the cause of royalty, was nationalised in the hearts of the Vendéans.

Before the revolution this family had inhabited the chateau of La Durbellière, not far from Nantes. Its chief, Louis de la Rochejaquelin had emigrated with three sons in 1791, and had taken refuge at Tournay The second of his sons, Louis de la Rochejaquelin, made, when a mere child, the campaign of the princes in Germany. He afterwards embarked with his father and his brothers for St. Domingo, where he fought, under his father's command, in the different wars of this colony. Driven from the island with the English, the father and sons retired to Jamaica; but war and their country recalling them towards Europe, the younger Louis de la Rochejaquelin served in an English regiment of the line on the continent. His father, who had embarked some time after him for Europe, was attacked at sea by a French privateer. In the action which took place, his left arm being nearly carried off by a round shot, he cut it off entirely with his sabre, and throwing it into the sea, continued to fight till he was made prisoner; when disabled by wounds, torn from his family, and consumed with grief, he expired, invoking with his last breath the name of his country.

XVIII.

His son Louis having returned to France after the pacification of his province, married the widow of the Marquis de Lescure, one of the Christian heroes of that war who had received martyrdom with death. Living on his estate, made

doubly popular by the name of his brother, killed in the first war, and by the name of Lescure, whose memory was hallowed in the hearts of the Vendéan peasants, Louis de la Rochejaquelin had conspired with the royalists of Bordeaux for the defection of that city from the Empire, and the recognition of the Duke d'Angoulême, whom he went to join in Spain. Louis XVIII. had given him, in recompense of his devoted services, the command of the horse grenadiers of the royal guard, a select regiment of cavalry, composed of the best and bravest soldiers of the guard of Napoleon. He was adored amongst them, and had conducted his regiment entire to Ghent, in the King's suite

XIX.

La Rochejaquelin, whose mind was as reflective as his heart was intrepid, was repugnant to a partial and ill-timed insurrection, which could have no other result than to concentrate the miseries of civil war in his province, while the fate of France would be decided on a more extensive battlefield. But his brother, Augustus de la Rochejaquelin, who had remained in La Vendée, wrote him word that the impatience to rise could not much longer be restrained; that already in the forest of La Roche-Servière, the theatre of the desperate struggle of the first Charette, another Charette, his nephew, and heir to his bravery, La Roche-Saint-André, and Goulaine, were opposing the troops of the Emperor; that D'Autichamp, who had but recently been accused of tardiness, and Suzannet, were forming their movable camps, indicating their points of rendezvous, and preparing for an outbreak at an early day.

The King, in spite of M. de Blacas, who reckoned but little on these adventurous heroisms of intestine war, sent Louis de la Rochejaquelin to London, to solicit a war subsidy for a contingent of 80,000 Vendéans, auxiliaries of the coalition in the pay of England. La Rochejaquelin went on his mission, and obtained the subsidy and transports to take him and his grenadiers to Lower Poitou. The insurrection broke out on the

15th, and the following day La Rochejaquelin arrived on the coast of St. Gilles, landed his troops, ammunition, and subsidy, and published the following proclamation of war:—

"Vendeans! behold your arms! The King loves you, and has sent me in the name of the nations of Europe, all full of admiration of your courage. Recollect how often my brother has led you on to victory: I shall only repeat to you his words which still inflame your hearts! If I advance, follow me! If I retreat, kill me! If I die, avenge me! Bonaparte is not ignorant that your rising will be the signal of his destruction, for it was he himself that gave you the name of giant. Europe has its eyes fixed upon you, and is marching to support you; and the King has said, 'I shall owe my crown to the Vendéans!'"

On the promulgation of this stirring appeal, M. Suzannet, cousin to La Rochejaquelin, hastened to St. Gilles with 4,000 armed peasants; he was followed by Charette and other chiefs, who informed the young general that M. d'Autichamp and his brother, Augustus de la Rochejaquelin, each at the head of a body of insurgents, were combining their movements to sweep La Vendée of the troops of the usurper, with whom they had already come to action.

XX.

This news was verified at the same hour by the event. Augustus de la Rochejaquelin, at the head of 8,000 peasants, almost without arms or ammunition, and wrought up to fanaticism by the curate of Aubiers, who had blessed them either in death or victory, had rushed upon the 26th regiment of the line at Maulevrier, dispersed and pursued it to Chatillon. There the regiment, being rallied by its colonel on a rising ground, had stopped the Vendéans; but the numbers of the wounded carried into Chollet after the retreat had thrown that town into dismay.

During the night which followed this victory, Augustus de la Rochejaquelin, informed of the landing of his brother, hastened to St. Gilles to arm his troops. Sapinaud, another

accredited chief, at the head of 8,000 peasants, was approaching with the same intention by another route. General Travot attacked them, in a vain attempt to carry off their ammunition: they repulsed him, and effected their junction at St. Gilles with Louis de la Rochejaquelin and his grenadiers. The country along the coast arose with enthusiasm at the news of these successes; and couriers having carried exaggerated accounts of them to London and to Ghent, the English cabinet and the King looked upon the insurrection already as victorious.

XXI.

Two days after the chiefs assembled at Palluau proceeded to the appointment of a general-in-chief; and as division, and independent commands, had lost the first war, union and obedience ought to assure the triumph of the second. At the council of war, Suzannet and Sapinaud, though they regretted the absence of a prince who would have removed all pretext of rivalship, generously consented to recognise La Rochejaquelin as their superior. The consent of Augustus de la Rochejaquelin was not, of course, to be doubted; one brother could not be the rival of another. D'Autichamp, who was fighting at a distance, was the only one absent from the council; and La Rochejaquelin being unanimously proclaimed general, wrote to him to obtain his recognition. He then decided on marching upon Bourbon-Vendée, and on the evening of the 20th the army under his orders penetrated without any obstacle to Aizenay. Everything seemed to presage victory for the following day; and the royal army, strong in its numbers, in its arms, its ammunition, its chiefs, and its enthusiasm, slept in all the security inspired by the presumed consternation of the enemy. It was thought by the Vendéans that the imperial troops were confounded, retreating, and occupied in falling back for the purpose of rallying in the fortified towns; but they were mistaken.

General Travot, whom a long experience of the Vendéans had accustomed to their impetuosity and their faults, formed a column of attack, marched under cover of the woody country,

and waiting until sleep and darkness favoured his enterprise, he divided his troops into two bodies, and presented himself at midnight at the gates of Aizenay To the challenge of the drowsy sentinels he replied by the cry of "Vive le Roi!" pushed his two columns at the same instant by different gates into the centre of the town, surprised the Vendéans in their bivouacs, in the squares, streets, and houses, where they reposed in confidence; shot them down, sabred them, dispersed them, or made them prisoners Those who attempted to return hap-hazard the fire of the enemy, killed or wounded each other. The chiefs had scarcely time to mount their horses to endeavour to rally their troops; the most intrepid, and amongst these the brother-in-law of the general La Rochejaquelin, Beauregard, were killed in attempting to cover the retreat. Charette fell pierced with five balls, and holding a handkerchief to his breast to prolong his life for a moment by stopping the blood: "Soldiers!" he exclaimed, "swear to me before I die to obey La Rochejaquelin!" Saint André, one of these young chiefs, being wounded and conducted to the presence of Travot, was spared by that general, who joined humanity to courage. "Doubtless you have been forced to serve," said Travot, to prompt him to an answer which might authorise him to save his life. "No, Sir," replied the young man, "I have voluntarily followed my colours" "But at least," said Travot, "you were without arms when you were made prisoner." "Yes, general," replied Saint Andre, "that is true, for they were broken in fighting against you!"

XXII.

The army of La Rochejaquelin felt its confidence weakened by this overthrow at the very outset of a war of enthusiasm, but still the young general rallied its scattered remains. The peasants reckoned on a return of good fortune through the army of D'Autichamp, who was supposed to be fighting and conquering at the same instant in Anjou. D'Autichamp was, in fact, operating in the ancient domains of Cathelineau, of Bonchamp, and of Stofflet; a country where every peasant was

a soldier, or the son of a soldier of the old war. All the Chouan chiefs who had survived Georges, and all the sons of the military families of the province, were serving under his orders; the Caquerays, the Haies', the Beauveaus, the Walshs, the Clermonts, the La Vauguyons, the La Guesneries, the Sosspeaux, the Kersabiecs, the Vaudreuils. Ten or twelve thousand peasants of their respective parishes followed their chiefs, or the sons of their ancient chiefs. La Vendée seemed for the last fifteen years to have been preparing these gatherings. Cries of war issued from every cabin, urging D'Autichamp to pounce upon the threatened division of Travot, and to seize upon Chollet

But whether from an adherence to the principles of regular warfare, fatal to insurrections, where promptitude should be the only tactics, or whether from the terror with which his plans were inspired by the disaster of Aizenay, D'Autichamp avoided a collision with the forces of Travot. He gave them time to evacuate Chollet and to fall back to the rear; and he entered Chollet himself, not as a conqueror who seizes upon the field of battle, but as a tactician who occupies an undisputed position. He was joined there by La Rochejaquelin, who proceeded to form his staff, composed of M. de Tinguy, and of La Roche-Saint-André: Canuel, an old general of the convention against the Vendéans, but who had now embraced their cause, was appointed his principal lieutenant, whose experience was to organize all whom La Rochejaquelin should stir up to action. D'Autichamp recognised, like the other chiefs, the supremacy of La Rochejaquelin, and the mission he held from the King.

XXIII.

During these preliminaries of war on the left bank of the Loire, D'Andigné was forming fourteen legions of insurgents on the right bank. The chiefs of these legions were the Coislins, the Vaudemonts, the Ménards, the Turpins, the Narcés, the Beaumonts, names already illustrious in the old wars, and endeared by recollection to the peasants.

General Tranquille, honoured for his moderation amidst

the extremities of civil war, and Embrugeau, fortified themselves in the heart of the country of the Chouans, and commenced the attack in all rencounters. Gaûthier, Charnacé, and Champagne raised bands on their flanks. Athanasius Charette, Sol de Grisolles, a general and negociator of long standing, the Cadoudals, the Count de Marigny, grown old in the battle fields of Britany, all took arms at the same time. Everything foretold a struggle of 100,000 men in communication with the sea, soon to be masters of the course of the Loire, commanding Nantes, menacing Angers, and communicating to Normandy the example and the movement of the insurrection spread even to the heart of the Empire. The administrations and detachments of the Emperor retired from the revolted countries, earnestly imploring speedy reinforcements of troops of the line. "Forty thousand men," they wrote, "are not sufficient; whole villages fly to arms, and one hope alone is left—division between the chiefs D'Autichamp and La Rochejaquelin, who had already come into collision too rudely at Nantes, two months back, during the attempt of the Duke de Bourbon, to have yet forgotten their mutual insults. To cut off La Vendée, at any price, from the sea, which supplies it with arms, and from the country of the Chouans, which prepares its soldiers, such is the plan which the Emperor's government should adopt and execute without delay."

XXIV.

La Rochejaquelin, on his side, wished to precipitate events, to move to the sea coast and to put himself in communication there with the English fleet and Admiral Hotham, who was to bring arms and ammunition; afterwards to cross the Loire, and join the army of Marigny and of Sol de Grisolles, to advance in mass upon Paris. To this plan D'Autichamp gave his assent, and the troops proceeded from all parts towards the coast. The divisions of Sapinaud and of Augustus de la Rochejaquelin met at Soulans, but those of D'Autichamp failed in appearing at the assigned rendezvous. Louis de la Rochejaquelin, in spite of his inadequate force, hoped to have time

to communicate with the squadron in sight at two leagues from the coast; and sent Robert de Chastaigniers to announce his presence to Admiral Hotham, and to fix an hour and place for the landing of the military stores and equipments. Meanwhile, La Rochejaquelin prepared everything to cover the operation with an imposing force against the imperial general Travot.

XXV.

During these preparations Suzannet, one of his generals, had marched at the head of 4,000 men, the remains of the army of the elder Charette, from the districts inured to war and inspired by his memory. On his arrival at Lamotte-Foucrand, Suzannet learned that 6,000 of the imperial troops occupied Chollet and threatened his flank, if he pursued his march. Instead, therefore, of advancing to the coast, he sent to demand reinforcements from the commander-in-chief, who immediately weakened his own position by some thousands of men, to cover and strengthen that of his friend. Soon after, Gabriel Duchaffault, one of the chiefs of Suzannet's army, arrived at headquarters, and invited La Rochejaquelin to Lamotte-Foucrand, to receive, he said, decisive communications which changed the face of things altogether. Instead of obeying La Rochejaquelin, exposed alone to the enemy for the common cause, they were negociating; and we shall now explain the nature of this transaction, in which the loyalty of some of the betrayed chiefs occasioned the failure of the enterprise and the loss of the general.

XXVI.

The Emperor had foreseen with just terror the effect of a general insurrection of the west of the empire at the moment, when with divided and unequal forces, he should be fighting the coalition in the north. The day had gone by when the convention could conquer, at the same time, La Vendée and Germany; and the exhausted and repudiated despotism could not renew the prodigies of patriotism and of the revolution. Fouché undertook to suspend, by negociations and promises, a

fratricidal war, the success or reverses of which must cost rivers of blood to both parties, without deciding the great contest between Europe and Napoleon.

The name of Fouché had a certain popularity in the west, from the numerous amnesties and restitutions of property which he had granted, as minister of police, after the first war; and his secret agents had the ear of several of the chiefs. He summoned to his private cabinet a Vendéan gentleman, an old combatant of the Vendéan armies under Bourmont, named M. de Malartic. He represented to him the inutility and the disasters of an insurrection, which could only cause misfortunes everywhere. He showed him a statement of the select troops which General Lamarque was directing with an intelligence worthy of Hoche, his model, upon the provinces, to stifle them in their own generous blood. He did more; he opened his heart to him, and communicated to him his correspondence with the court of Ghent; he confided to him the double part he was playing, as minister of the Emperor, and as the partisan of a restoration, prepared by his care, as a refuge for France, to preserve the country from destruction. Should Napoleon succumb, he indicated to him the Anglès, the Mouniers, the D'Argouts, the Guizots, as the confidants of his designs in favour of the government of Louis XVIII. The King himself, he told him, convinced that the allies would not act before the expiration of six weeks, and knowing that Bonaparte would have time to crush the Vendean forces, had ordered them to reserve themselves for his cause. M. de Malartic convinced by his confidence, and by the letters and names he had imparted to him, undertook to proceed to La Vendée, with two other royalists, M. de la Béraudiere and M. de Flavigny, the guarantees of his fidelity to his party.

They accordingly departed, and on arriving at Mans, they opened their mission to M. de Bordigné. "Fouché is with us," they said to him, "and here are the orders of Napoleon to his prefects and his generals, to suspend all hostilities at our requisition." Bordigné, in astonishment, delayed his departure for La Vendée; and Malartic, La Béraudiere, and Flavigny, traversed both banks of the Loire, and the assembled armies,

under the safeguard of the authorities. They arrived at the chateau of La Chardiere, the residence of Suzannet, and requesting an interview with him in his camp, communicated to him in writing the object of their mission. Suzannet sent them on to La Rochejaquelin and to Canuel, who energetically refused to hear them. D'Autichamp, less irritated, received Fouché's three negociators in his camp at Tiffauges. He listened to their proposition, and was astonished at what they confided to him; but he declined replying to them until he had consulted his chiefs. By the advice of his council of war, he made all conferences with them subordinate to the decision of La Rochejaquelin, his superior in command.

During these hesitations Suzannet, inclining towards peace, continued inactive; while the negociations being divulged amongst the chiefs and the soldiers, shook the resolutions and characters of many. The troops of Travot and Lamarque, reinforced by the National Guards of the patriotic towns and country, advanced in imposing numbers towards the Marais, and towards the sea; 25,000 men, divided into five columns, traversed the Vendéan soil in all directions in rear of the insurgent armies; cutting off the royalist forces from the Morbihan, while the space alone between the sea and Suzannet remained free to La Rochejaquelin. The latter had still force enough to conquer, but this force was hourly melting under his hand; for the peasants, influenced by the distrust so adroitly spread through their ranks, exclaimed that their general-in-chief only kept so close to the shore that he might abandon them, as their fathers had been abandoned at Quiberon, by taking refuge on board the English squadron. Everything, in short, was discouraging in a war which had no longer religious fanaticism, nor royalist enthusiasm, nor persecution, nor dispossession, nor the scaffold for its aliment. The time was past, and men are the offspring of the time.

XXVII.

Meanwhile La Rochejaquelin concentrated his army at Saint-Croix-de-Vie, to cover the disembarkation; and repaired

himself on board the vessel of Admiral Hotham, the *Superb*, where he was received by those brave soldiers incapable of treason, with the honours due to a general of the same cause in which they were embarked. The squadron sent ashore in all its boats the cannon, powder, muskets, balls and subsidy which had been promised, and the royalist troops armed themselves with cries of joy and gratitude. La Rochejaquelin expected the arrival of his chiefs to divide amongst their camps these pledges of victory, but three days elapsed without any movement on their part towards him. The third day a courier brought him a joint letter from Sapinaud, Suzannet, and D'Autichamp, in which they acquainted him in an embarrassed style, "that their troops were either disbanding, or refusing to follow them; that the presence of a prince of the house of Bourbon was necessary to impart enthusiasm and constancy to the peasants, disheartened by the slaughter at Aizenay, and that they advised him to fall back promptly on his own country to aid in the common defence."

A separate and more friendly letter from Suzannet, confirmed, while it softened the terms of these resolutions of the generals, and spoke to him of the conferences between Malartic La Béraudiere, Flavigny, and the chiefs; concluding with the important intimation of an approaching suspension of arms.

XXVIII.

As a consequence of these negociations, which were as yet neither consummated nor rejected, 15,000 peasants of the camps of Suzannet, of Sapinaud, and of D'Autichamp, dispersed and returned to their villages. Lamarque advanced, under favour of this disarmament; but mingling policy with war, he suspended hostilities, and interdicted rigour towards inoffensive assemblages. La Rochejaquelin remained alone, exposed with 1,200 brave young officers and peasants, attached to his house even to death, between the sea and the enemy. Indignation swelled in his heart, and in an order of the day to his retreating army, he gave utterance to feelings of anger and despair. He dismissed Sapinaud, D'Autichamp, and Suzannet, reproaching

them with the baseness of their compromise with the devastators of France, and of the world; and appointed in their place, Messieurs de Civrac, Duchaffault, and Duperrat. He forgot that civil war proclaims its own chiefs, and does not receive them from others. His confidence increased with danger; and on the same day he announced to the King that La Vendée, purged of some traitors, would be stronger than before this disgraceful pacification, and that before eight days had elapsed, 50,000 men would rally round his standard In fact, the tocsin was rung in all the belfries by his orders, and Duperrat rallied the parishes to protect the convoy of arms and ammunition, which brought warlike assistance to La Vendée.

XXIX.

On the same day also Suzannet and Sapinaud celebrated with great pomp in their camp the funeral obsequies of Charette, whose death we have recounted at Aizenay. A column of 1,500 men of Travot's army, passed with confidence within range of the Vendéans, while occupied in mourning for their chief. Suzannet was entreated to attack this column, but he made no reply, and marched his peasants in another direction. Duchaffault disobeyed, however. Followed by Lemaignan and by Chabot, he hastened in pursuit of the imperialists, fired on, and chased them as far as Légé. These were the last shots of the insurrection fired in the interior: the Marais alone did not entirely disarm.

Meanwhile, La Rochejaquelin, threatened in flank and rear by two of Travot's generals, Grosbon and Estève, filed off under shelter of the downs. He was separated from the corps of Grosbon by the river Vie; and the two armies fired on each other without approaching, from the opposite banks. Grosbon, aimed at by a Vendéan from the window of a belfry, was shot dead in the midst of his column. At this moment, La Rochejaquelin received four envoys from the camps of Sapinaud, of Suzannet, and of D'Autichamp, Messieurs de Tinguy, De la Roche-Saint-André, De Goulainc, and De Martray. These young men had the audacity, in the name of their respective armies, to

demand of their general-in-chief by what title he held his command, and kept possession of the warlike stores, which he had seized on for his personal army. La Rochejaquelin, who had no other titles than his name, and the council of war of St. Gilles, evaded the question, impressed upon them the necessity of union, and conferred commands on themselves. They finished by recognising the authority of him they had come to insult, and departed to obey his orders.

General Estève, at the head of a column of 2,000 men, having overtaken the royalist army during the night, La Rochejaquelin faced about, fell upon him at daybreak, and drove him back in disorder to some heights, where he rallied his men, under cover of some dikes and hedges, whence they opened a heavy fire upon the advancing peasants. One of the royalist chiefs having fallen, his followers dispersed in consternation, amidst cries of *Sauve qui peut*. La Rochejaquelin and his brother Augustus stood alone, exposed to the enemy's fire, calling back, conjuring, and encouraging their soldiers. At this moment, Augustus de la Rochejaquelin fell, struck with a ball in the knee, under his horse, which was killed at the same instant. He was carried off the field by his friends, but Louis de la Rochejaquelin still remained, hoping that his constancy and his example would stop the flight. Standing upon an eminence close to the enemy's line, be brandished his hat on the point of his sword, to reconnoitre a body of peasants of the Marais who were returning to his call. He was only separated by a few paces from the soldiers of Estève; and his attitude, voice, and gesture made him known at once as a chief. Lieutenant Lupin of the Parisian gendarmes, ordered his men to take aim at the general; they did so, and La Rochejaquelin fell dead in the arms of his followers, who avenged him by victory, as his brother had wished to be avenged. But this victory was changed into mourning for his army; and La Vendée, though scarcely risen, fell at once with him and for ever.

A young poet, who had escaped from the college of Fontenay to follow him, intoxicated, even before the age of poetry, with the battles and the splendour attached to his name, fought at his side; and threw himself upon his body, to cover,

or to reanimate his general. A shower of balls pierced him as he lay on the breast of La Rochejaquelin, and the bard died and was buried with his hero.

XXX.

Thus fell, in the flower of his age, the author and the victim of this war. He was mourned in both camps; and his peasant followers in La Vendée, the troops of the line, in which he had comrades and friends, and his grenadiers in Belgium, when they learned his death, mingled their sorrows over his untimely fate. On the following day his sister, ignorant of his death, but having learnt the defection of his divisions, mounted her horse, and with dishevelled hair galloped through the villages in the neighbourhood of her residence, uttered cries of distress and vengeance at the doors of all the cottages, caused the tocsin to sound, harangued, supplicated, and aroused the peasants of the country. The excited crowd armed at her voice, and exclaimed, "Come on! Let us save our wives and children!"

But it was too late. La Rochejaquelin was already buried amongst the furrows of the battle field, honoured with the mourning of both armies, and avenged by the remorse of his generals. His body was given to his soldiers and carried to the village of Perrier. At a later period La Vendée raised a funeral cross on a hillock in the middle of the field where he had drawn his last sigh. It bears the following inscription: "On this hillock was killed, and covered with its earth, Louis de la Rochejaquelin." They have planted it with "immortals," a wild flower sacred to the monuments of heroes. Madame de la Rochejaquelin, twice a widow, remained on the family estate with eight children, the eldest of which was not twelve years old. One of them was destined to continue, in some other crisis of his country, the splendour of a name which the revolution has raised on a level with the most poetical names of our history.

XXXI.

Augustus de la Rochejaquelin, the brother of Louis, having recovered from his wounds, sacrificed his feelings to the cause of his country, and rejoined Suzannet, without addressing a single reproach to that general, having refused the command-in-chief which was offered to him to appease his resentment: the choice of a chief was therefore adjourned. Meanwhile D'Andigne maintained his strong organization on the right bank of the river, and only listening with reserve to the emissaries of Fouché, continued to harass Lamarque. This young general, impatient for glory, with a ready eloquence, and prompt in action, was in hopes of winning the rank of a marshal of France by his brilliant success in La Vendée He gave no truce to D'Andigné, and every day witnessed a fresh combat, in which prodigies of individual valour on both sides, recalled those exploits of single combat in the wars of antiquity. Sol de Grisolles, at the head of the heroic scholars of the college of Vannes, swept the Morbihan, Cadoudal the coast, and the royalists fortified themselves at Auray to the number of 1,000 combatants. Being attacked on the very field where the victims of Quiberon were buried, they triumphed, and pardoned their prisoners whose fathers had not pardoned theirs under the convention.

The Vendéans, after having listened to the propositions of peace made by Fouché, were ashamed when too late to sign them. They conferred the supreme command on Sapinaud, and concentrated themselves at La Roche-Servière to fight. Lamarque offered them battle, after having first offered them peace. Suzannet, who commanded, wished to spare the blood of his soldiers, but was himself carried away by their ardour. Rendered desperate by the death of La Rochejaquelin, for which he reproached himself, he now sought death himself by way of expiation. Being twice wounded, and his horse killed under him, he dashed forward on that of his aide-de-camp, to throw himself once more into the midst of the fire, and fell at last into the arms of La Roche-Saint-André, where he expired, while Lamarque pursued the remnant of this army without a

chief, D'Autichamp hastened to La Roche-Servière, took the command, and resisted Lamarque and Travot united. His troops were decimated around him before he would give up the town and the victory, and Lamarque again offered him a truce, or peace.

XXXII.

A conference was accepted; and the chiefs, amongst whom reappeared Augustus de la Rochejaquelin, assembled at a village in the neighbourhood of Chollet, where they had been convoked by Sapinaud. Some of them were obstinately bent on continuing the war; others, with D'Autichamp, insisted on putting a stop to the useless effusion of blood. The army was divided: the great majority of the soldiers, accustomed to the turbulent and adventurous life of civil war, were indignant at the weakness of their generals, and vociferated reproaches and menaces around the hall where they were deliberating. The repugnance, however, of the mass of the population to stain the country any further with blood, the defeats of Aizenay and of La Roche-Servière, the death of La Rochejaquelin, the absence of the princes inactive at Ghent while their adherents were immolating themselves for them in Britany, the numerous forces and negociations of Lamarque, the private promises of Fouché, the certainty of an approaching decision by other arms on the plains of Belgium, everything led the majority of the council towards peace. It was accordingly signed by thirty-six chiefs, in the names of their several divisions. The Morbihan alone continued under arms, and La Vendée, patient and immovable awaited from elsewhere the fiat of destiny.

BOOK TWENTY-THIRD.

Situation of Napoleon—Labours of Napoleon and Benjamin Constant—"*Acte Additionel*"—Decree for the Convocation of the Chamber—The Federations—Address of the Federates to Napoleon—Reply of the Emperor—Ratification of the "*Acte Additionel*" by the People—The *Champ de Mai*—Address of the Electors to Napoleon—Speech of the Emperor.

I.

NAPOLEON, to obtain from France the time and the efforts which would be called for by a war of extermination, had been obliged, as we have seen, to change his nature, and to flatter the instincts of liberty, which he had not only stifled but insulted during his first reign. This part, the hypocrisy of which was evident, lowered this great character to false-seeming and to concessions which debase absolute power itself. The master who is compelled to implore obedience is beneath the people who grant it. The man who is suspected of deceiving that he may reign, no longer reigns; he merely represents on the throne a double part which provokes distrust and disdain.

Such was the situation of Napoleon in the midst of the liberal, revolutionary, or republican exigencies of the popular counsellors by whom he was surrounded. He caressed them, but he feared them; he strove to seduce them, sometimes by affecting a sincere conversion to democratic and constitutional ideas, sometimes by converting them himself to his real thoughts, by the perspective of a reign to be shared with them. They who observed him no longer recognised the man of self-willed resolutions. His soul bent under his fault, his dignity under compromises, his genius even under his irresolutions. He made a traffic of liberty to men who bartered

power with him in exchange; then again he seemed to abandon everything to destiny and the people, hoping to win all back with the prestige of a new Marengo.

II.

Benjamin Constant for a long time his enemy, but now the confidant of his most secret hesitations, was astonished to find a character steeped in so many tyrannies so variable, so undecided, and so flexible. He saw how much Napoleon needed material force to appear so powerful in will. "In our conversations, and in the conversations with his counsellors and his ministers," said he, in recounting these mysteries of the imperial palace, after the 20th of March, "it was perceptible that this nature, so decided in modes of action, was in reality at that time vacillating and even irresolute. Napoleon began by commanding, but, like a man who fears to be disobeyed, he felt the necessity of convincing. Tossed about in these latter times by continual incertitudes, it was not necessary to contradict him in order to unsettle him; it was sufficient to maintain the silence of disapprobation."

It was necessary to frame the constitution which he would have to present to his assemblies, that his return might appear at least to bring an institution to the country. This was for Napoleon a perpetual subject of indecisions and councils; he would and he would not twenty times a day. To give nothing was to destroy his popularity, and to give too much was to ruin himself. Benjamin Constant, of a genius as theoretical and peremptory as a German abstraction, but tamed and made supple in the presence of the Emperor by his defection and his selfish ambition, was eminently qualified to serve, on one side, these false appearances of liberal concessions with which Napoleon was desirous of decking his return; and on the other, the secret reservations of authority with which he did not wish to dispense, that he might still continue despotic, though with the appearance of being constitutional.

These two men, therefore, suited each other; the one consulted from necessity, the other advised from decency; but

neither one nor the other consulted or advised with sincerity. They did not seek for institutions but for pretexts; and, were the people only satisfied with appearances, it was sufficient.

III.

Nevertheless, the popular or republican party had taken for serious the vague promises of liberty thrown out by the Emperor as a bait upon his route. From every quarter he received in pamphlets, in journals, and in correspondence, drafts of constitutions; and his cabinet was besieged by projects of this description. The Emperor turned them over incessantly to find amongst them ideas sufficiently popular to captivate public opinion, and sufficiently vague not to shackle his own power. "Here!" he said to Benjamin Constant, as he gave them to him at his audiences; "here they are of every description." Some were projects of a republic, with an hereditary presidency, giving to the people the satisfaction of the name, and to the family of the Cæsars the perpetuity of the Empire: the others were declarations of the natural rights of man, placed as extreme limits to the encroachments of the supreme power. These latter imitated Venice in demanding a council of ten, with censors, and a Doge enchained by a state inquisition; the former called for a national convention, and a supreme and perpetual executor of its rights, such as Murat had dreamed of, a tyrant obeying a tyranny superior to the nation and to himself. He smiled at these vain efforts of revolutionary compromise, to conciliate in his person the reign of the people and the reign of a master of the people.

Benjamin Constant himself, charged with the preparation of a draft of a constitution, could not exactly suit the mind of Napoleon. The Emperor accepted all the ordinary and general formulæ in which the deliberative assemblies since 1789, had comprised symbols nearly as ideas: but he obstinately refused to accept the sovereignty and the election of the people, whether he was apprehensive that this sovereignty seriously consulted, might refuse him a new investiture; or whether he wished to preserve in his own possession the pre-existing right and title

of empire, which would vest the merit of restoration in his own hands.

"No! no!" he said to his counsellors, who spoke to him of dating his new reign from a new contract between him and the nation. "No! that is not what I mean; you deprive me of the past, but I wish to preserve it. And what will you do with the eleven years of my reign? I have some rights therein: Europe knows the past; the new constitution must be attached to the old one; it will thus have the sanction of many years of glory and success!"

IV.

His counsellors replied, "that he had greater occasion for popularity than for recollections of the past; that if his past reign glorified military France, it humbled France in its civil form; and that to reconquer another empire, it was essentially necessary to renew his title at the fountain head of liberty." Deaf to these objections, which degraded him from the throne that he had constructed with his own sword, to consolidate him on one, broader it was true, but which seemed to him inferior because it was conditional, Napoleon was inflexible. Benjamin Constant, the complaisant interlocutor of his conversations, and ambiguous editor of the thoughts of his master, always yielded. By his sudden transition from one dynasty to another he had, in fact, made it impossible for him to resist.

It was agreed, therefore, that the old imperial constitution, in which despotism assumes a constitutional colour, should not be in any respect abrogated; and that to satisfy at once his pride and his necessity, Napoleon should simply present an additional supplement to that constitution, a supplement which should give a more serious representation, and some more real liberties to France. Confiscation even, that penalty which aggravates banishment and death in the hands of tyranny, was not thereby abolished. The sovereignty of the people was inscribed in it, but limited in the article which recognised it. Finally, the mode of accepting this constitution was a mockery, for it was not offered

to the votes of the people but imposed upon them. But even more than this, it was insolently supposed to be accepted beforehand, and was put into execution before it was submitted to the people.

"What!" exclaimed the Emperor in the Council of State, where some republicans timidly took offence at these incomplete forms and concessions: "I am urged into a path which is not my own! I am enfeebled! I am enchained! I am required to abolish the confiscation of the property of guilty persons! France seeks me and no longer finds me! She demands what is become of the iron hand of her Emperor! Public opinion was excellent on my arrival, but it is now detestable! Why do you speak to me of abstract justice, of natural laws? Necessity is the only law—the only justice, the public safety. You wish that those men whom I have loaded with wealth should make use of it to conspire against me in foreign countries! That cannot be—that shall not be. Every Frenchman, every soldier, every patriot would have a right to request an account from me of the riches left to his enemies. When peace shall be made we will deliberate. Every day has its task, every circumstance its law, every man his nature! Mine I know is not that of an angel! No; the old arm of the Emperor must again be felt!"

These transports renewed at every objection daunted every mind. The long habit of obedience had destroyed the capability of resistance. Those timid men who were selling the Empire while they affected to contend for liberty, issued from these conferences conquered and enslaved. They had obtained a glimpse, in these outbursts of the untamed spirit of Napoleon, the certain awaking of despotism the very day when he could venture to burst the feeble bonds with which they affected to surround him. The eye of Napoleon had shot forth glances, and his voice gave utterance to accents which revealed a second 18th Brumaire in perspective. Benjamin Constant himself was struck down by them: he began to repent of his compact and to dread for his fame the responsibility of an accomplice. On leaving the palace he went to confide his anguish to M. de Lafayette, his friend, and to fix,

as it were, the date of his grief. Lafayette, after having hailed the return of the Bourbons, had forced himself, like Benjamin Constant, to attach to Napoleon some hopes of the return of '89; or rather, Lafayette was already anticipating the hour of Napoleon's fall to rise again himself with a popularity and a dictatorship strengthened by retirement.

"I perceive that I have entered upon a sombre and a doubtful course," said Benjamin Constant to Lafayette; "and I begin to fear that I have undertaken an enterprise beyond my powers, in attempting to bind this man by a constitution. I see the Emperor reappear with thoughts which alarm me. He has a liking for me, and I am grateful for it; perhaps this gratitude will deprive me, unknown to myself, of somewhat of my impartiality. Who can answer for himself in the presence of power? Recollect what I tell you at this moment: watch this man, and if ever he appears to you to proceed towards despotism believe nothing that I shall say to you afterwards; confide nothing to me, but act without me and even against me."

These precautions taken against tyranny at the very moment he was serving it, placed Benjamin Constant in an attitude with both parties at the same time. He had scruples for the one, complaisance and complicity for the other. His confidence was a treason; he inspired it without using the word, for fear of meriting the name of traitor. Lafayette was temporiser enough to comprehend his friend by a hint. Human affairs, when characters like Benjamin Constant mingle in the drama, float between Tacitus and Molière, producing bursts of laughter by the side of bloodshed.

V.

Napoleon resisted no less the creation of a peerage, as a substitute for his senate, than he did that of an independent elective representation. All parliaments were offensive to him. "What will a peerage be?" he said, with a justness of understanding that shamed his counsellors. "It will wound the pride of my army. Where are the elements of a representative

aristocracy in France? The possessors of ancient fortunes are my enemies, while the new ones are shamefully acquired. Five or six illustrious names are not sufficient; eight years hence my peers of France will be nothing more in the eyes of the nation than soldiers, or chamberlains. No one will see in my institution anything but a camp, or an antechamber of my palace."

VI.

But with the recent versatility of his thoughts, and his obstinate instinct for social privileges, he returned a moment after to hereditary institutions. "A constitution resting upon a vigorous aristocracy resembles," he said, "a ship; while a constitution without aristocracy is nothing but a balloon lost in the air. We may direct a ship because it has two powers which balance each other: the rudder finds a fulcrum in the waves; but a balloon is the sport of a single power, it has no point of support, the wind carries it away, and direction is impossible." He turned himself, with a constant recurrence of regret, towards the ancient French nobility, which had entered in a body the camp of the restoration. He flattered himself still with the hope of regaining it, as he had seduced the familiars of the court at the commencement of his first reign. "I must come to it and it must come to me, one time or another," said he with a sigh; "but the souvenirs are too recent; let us adjourn that point till after the battle; I shall have them if I am the strongest: meanwhile, let us open a door for them in an aristocratical chamber. After some hesitation they will finish by entering."

VII.

The public, a witness of these hesitations and subterfuges, received with indignation the "Additional Act" to the constitutions of the Empire. The Emperor was dismayed at it. He was not even thanked for his weakness. He regretted it. Open tyranny would have had frankness, boldness, and dignity at least. "Well!" said he the day after the promulgation to his confidants, "the new constitution does not succeed in public

opinion?" "It is because they do not believe it to be real," replied Benjamin Constant, persisting in his work: "execute it, Sire, and it will be believed." The Emperor still hesitated; he had scruples. "What!" he exclaimed in his turn, "put in execution a constitution which has not been yet accepted! What will the people say?" "When the people see that they are free," replied the confidant, "that they have representatives, that you lay down the dictatorship, they will feel that you are not trifling with their sovereignty." He reflected, and then as if he inclined to the first counsel they had given him, he said, "You are right in the main; when the people see me act thus, disarming myself of absolute power, they will perhaps think me more certain of my strength. 'Tis well to try it." He walked about his cabinet, and dictated the decree which convoked the chambers.

VIII.

Lafayette had returned to his retreat at Lagrange, not far from Paris, to offer his name to the anticipated candidateship. Benjamin Constant wrote to him in triumph, as if he had gained a victory for liberty over despotism. "At length," said the counsellor of both sides to the veteran of the constitution of 1791, "the decree has appeared! In three weeks the nation will possess its constitution. You will be elected! Your election will be a great step towards the representative order. I have, however, my inquietudes. If the chamber is divided, and that the electoral colleges send us many enemies, I fear there will be storms! Write me word if you are satisfied."

"Yes," answered Lafayette, "I am satisfied: the immediate convocation of an assembly of representatives appears to me the only salvation. I shall have more pleasure in mixing with public affairs than I should have had some days back." And the scene was opening to him again, and he foresaw its stuggles, its abdications, and its violences. He knew by experience that no tyranny can resist the turbulence of an assembly but by overturning it. Faithful to his part, he was

resolved to take the side of the assembly, whether to combat, or submit to the tyranny with the people. His name, a long time in obscurity, must rally the republicans or the constitutionalists, between whom his character had always floated in the first revolution.

IX.

Meanwhile the threats of invasion, the promises of freedom, the promulgation of a constitution in which the people were named, the patriotism natural to the masses, the sudden recruiting of the army, the spontaneous federation of the departments, which were organising and forming themselves into unions to defend the soil, the convocation of the chambers. the movement of the elections which agitated different places, the mobilised National Guards, whose enthusiastic columns were marching through the central departments to occupy the fortified places on the frontiers, the vague hopes which the republicans, deceived by the names of Carnot, of Fouché, and of Thibaudeau, attached to the great solemnity of the *Champ de Mai*, convoked at Paris for the 26th May. on which occasion they entertained a confused hope of seeing Napoleon abdicate the Empire, and assume only the military dictatorship, to save the country, effect a peace, and leave a republic to France; all these various subjects profoundly agitated the country. Napoleon flattered these hopes, and Fouché allowed these rumours to propagate themselves; the one to find therein a momentary power, and the other to prepare in them irritating deceptions against the Emperor.

But the people in the country, and the inhabitants of the faubourgs, were arming themselves as for a desperate defence of the land. These fédérés quitting the tools of their respective trades for the pikes of the Bastile, recalled to memory the sinister agitations of the days which preceded and followed the Reign of Terror. Napoleon did not dare either to strike or encourage them; but he could not dissemble his repugnance to every description of undisciplined force. The image of the 10th August, of which he had been a spectator

in his youth, arose incessantly to his view. Passionately fond of the camp, he had a horror of the public places. "No," he said to his intimates. "I shall never be the Santerre of these people, after having been their Napoleon."

X.

The Emperor was compelled to humour this enthusiasm at which he was alarmed. On the point of reappearing before the representatives of the nation, he wished to show himself elevated on the shields of the people to the republican deputies and to Europe. The fédérés of the faubourgs began to murmur that arms had not been given to them; and they loudly demanded to be reviewed by him. These long columns of people of every trade, whom industry, labour, poverty, and vice even, do not render insensible to the noble instincts of patriotism, marched with hands empty, or armed with pikes and muskets, from the faubourg Saint-Marceau, and the faubourg Saint-Antoine, towards the Place du Carrousel. Their countenances, at once sorrowful and resolute, their arms hanging by their sides, their military steps, their miscellaneous weapons, their mean and humble clothing, impressed with the ragged aspect of labour, or the stains of indigence, recalled to the eye the revolutionary columns which the great demagogues excited from 1789 to 1794 against the Tuileries, or the convention. But it was to their country that these columns came to offer their lives; and Napoleon could not help admiring while he dreaded them. They were the source from which he drew his army. These men presented an address to the Emperor.

"We have received you with enthusiasm," they said, "because you are the man of the nation, the defender of the country, and because we expect from you a glorious independence and a wise liberty. Ah! Sire, why had we not arms at the moment when the foreign kings, emboldened by treason, advanced under the very walls of Paris? With what ardour would we have imitated that brave National Guard, reduced to take counsel of itself, and to fly without direction to meet the threatening peril! Our common resistance would have given

you time to arrive, to deliver the capital, and to destroy the enemy. We felt this truth; we called to you with all our hearts; we shed tears of rage as we looked on our arms useless for the common defence. The greater part of us have served under your orders in the war of liberty and of glory; we are all old defenders of the country; and the country ought with confidence to give arms to those who have shed their blood for it. Give us arms, Sire, in its name, and we swear to you not to fight except for our country and for you. We are not the instruments of any party, or the agents of any faction. "Vive la nation! vive la liberté! vive l'Empereur!"

XI.

Napoleon descended at their shouts from his apartments, reviewed their masses, while affecting to smile at those popular familiarities which secretly inspired him with more terror than confidence; and he responded to their cries of "Vive l'Empereur!" by the cry of "Vive la nation!" which he had stifled upon their lips for so many years past.

"Federated soldiers of the faubourgs Saint-Antoine and Saint-Marceau!" he said to them: "I have come back alone, because I calculated on the people of the cities, the inhabitants of the country, and the soldiers of the army, with whose attachment to the national honour I was well acquainted. You have justified my confidence. I accept your offer; I shall give you arms. Your arms, robust and strong in accomplishing the most laborious works, are more adapted than those of others for the handling of arms. As to courage, you are Frenchmen. Federated soldiers! if some men born in the highest classes of society have dishonoured the French name, the love of country, and the sentiment of national honour are preserved entire amongst the people of the cities, the inhabitants of the country, and the soldiers of the army. I am very glad to see you. I have confidence in you. Vive la nation!"

XII.

After this review the Emperor, closeted with his most intimate confidants, felt more profoundly than ever the abase-

ment of his situation. In the place of those 500,000 men who marched in military pomp from the extremities of the Empire under his sword, at the commencement of his great wars, he had only seen the phantom of those indigent and turbulent plebeians, who are stirred up by revolutions in the hearts of capitals without regular governments. This plebeian mass which agitated the capital to-day might overwhelm it to-morrow. "If I had known," said he to M. Molé, "how low I should be obliged to descend, I should have remained at the Isle of Elba." He ordered that no arms should be given to this multitude; for every undisciplined force disquieted him more for his power than it reassured him for the country. He despised these sudden risings of the people, terrible when they explode, but incapable of constancy. "The riots of the people," said he, "make revolutions; but arms alone make conquests." The *Marseillaise* hymn, which the fédérés repeated in chorus, on dispersing to their respective localities, sounded in his ears like the tocsin of the 10th of August; and he felt the Empire tremble at those songs which had formerly saved the country. The small number of fédérés and volunteers sufficiently told him that this movement was more turbulent than national; and everything indicated from day to day that the discontented, or suspicious feeling of the superior classes of the people was more unfavourable to him than ever.

XIII.

The registers opened in all the municipalities of the empire, for the acceptance of the constitution remained empty. Scarcely a million of suffrages canvassed by the agents of government, or brought forward by fear, ratified the "Additional Act." Some thousands protested, even in the registers, in the name of royalty, or of the republic. M. de Kergorlay, and M. de Rosambo, two men worthy, like M. Lainé, to defy tyranny, because they had the constancy to suffer persecution, boldly published their profession of political faith against the usurpation of the national sovereignty. The Emperor, to combat these protestations, and to inspire the electoral colleges in the

choice of representatives, appointed twenty-two commissioners extraordinary, and distributed amongst them the principal divisions of the Empire. He chose these commissioners amongst that undecided shade of men of flexible opinions, who, after having given pledges to the revolution, had passed over to his cause, and who belonged to him by the right of participation in his past career. The revolution might recognise them, and Bonapartism confided in them. These were MM. de Sussy, De Gérando, Rampon, Bedoch, Dumolard, Pommereuil, Rœderer, Miot, Vatry, D'Alphonse, Pontécoulant, Boissy-d'Anglas, Cafarelli, Français de Nantes, Quinette, Costez, Thibaudeau, Maret, Marchand, Colcher, Arrighi, and Chasles, men uncertain of the parts they were going to act, too strongly suspected of subserviency to the master, in the eyes of the republicans, and too much imbued with liberalism in the eyes of the fanatics of the Empire: some personally attached to the Emperor, others to Carnot, the most able admitted to the confidence of Fouché, but all wavering between opposing fidelity, ambition, or fear. Their mission coldly received in the departments, was useful only to the opposition, which they were obliged to caress, seeing that they could not vanquish it: it had no effect whatever on public opinion.

XIV.

This the Emperor was desirous of striking with a grand impression, by one of those scenes at once imperial, popular, and military, which the convention recalled to his memory. He convoked at Paris for the 1st of June, the representatives, the electors, and deputations from all the divisions of the army. This was a second and more popular coronation, with which he wished to consecrate in the eyes of the nation, and of Europe, his title to the Empire. He imparted to this solemnity all the pomp of war, of religion, and of peace.

The theatre chosen for this immense assemblage of the people and of the army, was the Champ-de-Mars, a modern amphitheatre, constructed during the revolution of 1789 for the grand federations of the people. A multitude, more eager

for the spectacle than attracted by enthusiasm, covered from daybreak the rustic steps of this immense circus.

Fifty thousand soldiers of the army, already on its march to Belgium, occupied the ground in front of the people, as if for one last review before opening the last campaign. Between the people and the army, however, there did not exist at that moment that concord which unites the citizen with the soldier in ordinary times.

The army felt some remorse towards the people, and the people a resentment against the army. But then these soldiers were the offspring of the people, and their defection was excused by their enthusiasm for their chief, and by their heroism. Moreover, they were going to fight, and perhaps soon to die, for their sacred soil; and their approaching destiny melted the hearts of the multitude until their fault was forgiven. Their resentment then took a higher aim; and the Emperor alone was accused amongst the different groups for having come to tempt their fidelity. He was contemplated at the *Champ de Mai* as the man of history rather than of popularity; and a unanimous presentiment appeared to prevail of his approaching and final disappearance. People only wished to receive a striking impression of this great page of history, to recal it to mind in their old age. The *Champ de Mai* was on that occasion a grand, and in the minds of the majority, a final scene of the tragedies of the age. The people and the army maintained a profound silence

XV.

A pyramid with broad steps was raised in the centre of the Champ-de Mars, the summit of which was terminated by a platform which supported a throne. The marshals, the generals, the courtiers, and the electors of the departments, were ranged upon the steps of this pyramid. The troops, forming a vast square of all arms, surrounded it. This was the Emperor's throne of shields, visible to the whole people, and to all his army; and they anxiously expected him that they might salute him with one last look, and one final acclamation.

He appeared, at length, accompanied by his brothers Lucien and Jerôme Bonaparte. The people, who expected a martial chief, whose manly profile was familiar to their eyes in the costume of the camp, were astonished to see him invested, as well as his brothers, with a long white tunic, in imitation of the sacerdotal and effeminate costume of the kings of Egypt. The antique robes, enveloping in their folds the men of yesterday, and changing to a theatrical representation the several impressions of the reality, disconcerted both the eyes and the thoughts of the spectators. The great man was hidden under the comedian · they were enacting the drama of that imperial etiquette which was supposed to have been banished with the old Empire into the wardrobe of the palace. That which was most striking in Napoleon at this moment was the soldier preparing for his last struggle with the world, and not the new man enveloped in the bandelets and diadems of ancient royalty. The hat, the coat, the boots of the camp, and the sword of the general, would have produced a much more profound sensation, because more true to the reality. Pomp was not suited to the occasion, but simplicity. In wishing to recall the sovereign, he only reminded them of the man. The soldiers did not recognise him under these vestments, while the people disdained the imposition so pompously paraded before their eyes. The pride of rank had badly counselled the Emperor and his family: the whisperings of surprise and raillery almost superseded the acclamations of the crowd.

XVI.

Three hundred officers of his troops, waving in the air the colours of their regiments which they held in their hands, saluted him with a long cry of "Vive l'Empereur!" A stage had been erected to bear an altar where these colours were to be consecrated before the eyes of the army and of the people. Cardinal Cambacères, Archbishop of Rouen, and brother of the Arch-Chancellor, celebrated the mysteries in the open air, as if to associate the God of nations with the benediction. On the termination of the ceremony, one of the electors (M.

Dubois of Angers), chosen for his sonorous and resounding voice, read the address, which the electors, assembled at Paris, had drawn up for the occasion. "Sire," began this address, an expression not contradicted by the small number of citizens who had attended the electoral colleges; in some of the departments, such as the Bouches-du-Rhone, the deputies were nominated by small cliques of eight or ten electors.

"Sire,—The French people had conferred upon you the crown, and you have laid it down without their consent; their suffrages now impose upon you the duty of resuming it.

"A new contract has been formed between the throne and the nation. Assembled from all points of the empire around the tables of the law, wherein we have come to inscribe the will of the people, that will, the only source of legitimate power, it is impossible for us not to elevate the voice of France, of which we are the immediate organs, and to say in presence of Europe to the august chief of the nation, what it expects from him, and what he has to expect in return.

"What does the league of allied kings require? How have we given cause for their aggression? We do not wish for the chief they would impose upon us, and we wish for the one they do not like. They dare to proscribe you personally; you, Sire, who, a hundred times master of their capitals, have generously consolidated them upon their shaken thrones. Were they to proscribe the lowest of our citizens, it would be our duty to defend him, he would be, like you, under the ægis of the law and of the nation.

"We are threatened with an invasion; yet, nevertheless, restricted within frontiers which are not ours, which for a long time, and before your reign, victory, and even peace, had extended, we have not overleapt this narrow limit, out of respect for treaties which you have not signed, but which you have offered to recognise. Are they not afraid of reminding us of times, and of a state of things but recently so different, and which may again be repeated? Would it be the first time that we had conquered Europe in arms against us?

"Sire, nothing is impossible, and nothing shall be spared to assure us honour and independence, those possessions dearer

than life. Everything shall be tried,—everything shall be done to repel an ignominious yoke. We say it to the nations, and may their chiefs hear us! If they accept your offers of peace, the French people will look to your administration, strong, liberal, and paternal, for motives of consolation for the sacrifices which peace may demand; but if nothing is left to it but the choice between war and shame, the nation will rise to a man to share in the war, for every Frenchman is a soldier: we are ready to release you from the offers, too moderate perhaps, that you have made to spare Europe from a fresh convulsion

"The three branches of the legislature are about to commence their operations, and one only sentiment will animate them. Confiding in your Majesty's promise, we entrust to it, we entrust to our representatives and to the Chamber of Peers, the care of revising, of perfecting, of consolidating in concert, without precipitation, without concussion, with prudence and deliberation, our constitutional system, and the constitutions which are to be its guarantee. Sire, a throne built up by foreign armies, has crumbled in an instant before you, because you have brought to us from retirement, which in great thoughts is only fruitful to great men, all the pathways of our true glory, all the hopes of our real prosperity."

The heralds at arms then proclaimed the acceptance by the French people of the constitution promulgated by the Emperor, and an immense roll of the drums imposed a complete silence on the multitude. Napoleon rose and said:—

"Emperor, consul, soldier, I owe everything to the people. In prosperity, in adversity, in the field of battle, in council, on the throne, in exile, France has been the sole and constant object of my thoughts and actions.

"Frenchmen, in traversing, amid the public joy, the different provinces of the Empire, I trusted I could reckon on a long peace. My thoughts then entirely dwelt upon the means of founding our liberty on a constitution resting on the wishes and interests of the people: therefore it is that I have convoked the *Champ de Mai*.

"I soon learned, however, that the princes who resist

all popular rights, and disregard the opinions and dearest interests of so many nations, were resolved on war. They intend to enlarge the kingdom of the Netherlands, and to give it for a barrier all our frontier places in the north, and to reconcile the differences which still divide them, by sharing among them, Lorraine and Alsatia. It behoved us then to prepare for war.

"Meanwhile, having to incur personally the hazards of battle, my first solicitude was to establish the nation forthwith. The people have accepted the constitutional act which I have presented to them.

"Frenchmen! you are about to return into your departments. Tell your fellow citizens that the circumstances are perilous; but that with union, energy, and perseverance, we shall emerge victorious out of this struggle of a great people against its oppressors; that future generations will severely scrutinise our conduct; that a nation has lost everything when it has lost independence! Tell them that the stranger kings whom I have raised to the throne, or who owe to me the preservation of their crowns, and who, in the days of my prosperity, have courted my alliance and the protection of the French people, now direct their strokes against my person. But if I did not see that it is the nation they really aimed against, I would sacrifice myself to their hatred. But tell the citizens also, that so long as the French people preserve for me those sentiments of love of which they give me so many proofs, this rage of our enemies will be powerless.

"Frenchmen! my wishes are those of the people, my rights are theirs; my honour, my glory, my happiness, can be no other than the honour, the glory, and the happiness of France."

When he had concluded, he laid his hand upon the gospels, and took the oath to the pontiff, to maintain the constitution: then throwing aside his imperial mantle, and appearing to his troops in his military uniform, in which they loved to see him on the field of battle:

"Soldiers," he said to the National Guard of the Empire, "soldiers of the land and sea forces, I confide to you the imperial eagle with the national colours! You swear to defend

it at the price of your blood against the enemies of the country! You swear that it shall always be your rallying sign! You swear it!"

A hollow, unanimous, and prolonged voice issued from the squadrons and battalions, repeating: "We swear it!" and a cry of "Vive l'Empereur!" running along the masses of the people, responded from the seats of the amphitheatre. The Emperor putting on again his white robe, sprinkled with bees, slowly ascended the steps of the pyramid, at the foot of which he had delivered his speech; he seated himself majestically upon the throne which was prepared for him on the summit of the platform, and contemplated thence, for the last time, his Empire, summed up in those marshals, those dignitaries, that army, and that multitude

Beneath him the arms, the plumes, the uniforms, the eagles, the standards grouped shone resplendent, agitated by the wind, on the four faces of the imperial pyramid, and seemed to unite in one cluster all the glories and the splendours of this empire, which the thunder was so soon to strike. The bands of all the regiments formed one vast orchestra, which flung into the air the echo of so many battle-fields, and such numerous victories. The troops broke into columns, like rivers of steel, and marched past the pyramid, greeting the Emperor with one continuous acclaim.

Napoleon having descended from his throne, delivered their colours to them with his own hand, addressing to each regiment at the same time one of those expressions which make every fibre of the heart palpitate in the breast of the soldier. To one he recalled Arcole, to another Marengo, to a third Egypt, to a fourth Austerlitz, and to all one or other of those campaigns in which each regiment had, under him, rendered its number illustrious in the catalogue of the army. When the Imperial Guard, the real flame of his camp, advanced the last of all, overwhelming him with their fanatical acclamations, he seemed more moved at its aspect than he had been on taking possession of his throne. "Soldiers of my Imperial Guard," he said to them in a martial voice, "you swear to surpass yourselves in the campaign which is about to

open! You swear to die sooner than permit the foreigner to come and dictate laws to your country!" "We swear it!" 22,000 men exclaimed with one voice, and they kept their oath.

XVII

Such was this vain and purely theatrical ceremony, which the Emperor had held out to public expectation for two whole months, as one of those mysterious events whence a new destiny was to spring for France. A scene, a review, and nothing more. The deception was general, and the murmuring universal. The royalists had hoped for an abdication, and an appeal to the people, who should give a free and universal vote as to the description of government which it would suit them to adopt after the war. The masses had hoped that the Emperor, extinguishing the quarrel against his name by crowning his son in conjunction with Austria, would thus remove every pretext for war. The republicans had hoped that the dictator would proclaim himself simply general, and that he would keep none of his imperial attributes except the sword to defend the threatened country, confiding its internal destinies to the republic. All looked at each other, therefore, with strong symptoms of deception on their features; and they mutually demanded if it was for such a court representation that they had been convoked from such a distance to this rendezvous of the French people.

Public murmurs followed this deception, and the boldness of speech and writing recalled the days of the Directory Napoleon was evidently already fallen in the opinion of the political classes; the military and popular classes alone remained attached to him, because they saw in him not power but country.

BOOK TWENTY-FOURTH.

Meeting of the Chambers—Lanjuinais President of the Chamber of Representatives—Discontent of the Emperor—Motion of M. Dupin on the refusal to take the Oath—Opening of the two Chambers—Interview between Napoleon and Lafayette—The Emperor's Speech to the Chambers—Addresses of the Chambers—Answers of the Emperor—Rupture between Napoleon and Fouché—The Emperor forms his Council of Government—Respective Forces of the Emperor and the Allies—Napoleon's plan of Campaign—His Departure from Paris—Character of Fouché and the part he played—Arrival of Napoleon at Avesnes.

I.

THREE days after the *Champ de Mai* the Chamber of Peers and the Chamber of Representatives assembled. The Emperor beheld with terror these new public powers issuing from an election on a revolutionary summons, and now standing for the first time in his presence; nor was he sufficiently reassured by the names of the majority of representatives nominated by his partisans in the departments, or by the names of the peers nominated by himself. There were men of republican enthusiasm not quite extinguished, like that of Lafayette, amongst the representatives; and in the Chamber of Peers there were royalist names to whom he did not dare to refuse this dignity, although he secretly distrusted them. In this, as in other things, his policy had been compelled to yield to his situation. Being obliged to temporise with all parties, he had decimated his own. The day after the *Champ de Mai* he avowed the fluctuations of his soul.

"The apprehension of my tyranny," he said to his confidants, "has turned all heads. The men ambitious of making a noise elevate themselves into advocates of the people; from

counsellors they become censors; from censors they become factious, and their next transition is into rebels. It then becomes necessary for the prince either to chase them away or to submit to their yoke." These words exhibited the pupil of Machiavel, reducing the duty of the prince to the sole duty of reigning, and suffering no other noise in the world except that which he made himself.

II.

The Chamber of Peers attested, by the paucity of illustrious names which composed it, the numerous refusals to form part of that body which Napoleon had received. Some already foresaw that this favour would become a proximate cause of proscription, and others did not yet dare to mix their ancient names with the new. Macdonald, faithful to the cause he had embraced, although it was vanquished, refused this dignity with respectful firmness; and the Emperor felt keenly a refusal which was a mute accusation levelled at his return.

The Chamber of Representatives elected Lanjuinais for its president; a choice which, from the outset, indicated the temper of this assembly. Lanjuinais, an intrepid patriot, one of the authors of the decree of forfeiture, which the year before had offered the throne to the Bourbons in exchange for a charter, the pledge of liberty, was one of those men who could neither be frightened nor corrupted. His opinions were identified with his conscience, and people felt assured that he would neither compound with tyranny, nor with foreign domination. With the eloquence and courage of antiquity he had braved the convention and the people during the Reign of Terror. A Girondist in heart and probity, he had braved the scaffold more than any one of them; and he had escaped it as heroes often escape death by defying it with a more sublime contempt of life. The Emperor did not like those characters which were as inflexible to caresses as to threats; and he felt that his power was deadened when it came in contact with such hearts.

His courtiers had tried everything in the assembly to prevent the representatives from fixing their choice on this Cato

of the revolution. They wished to have obtained the presidency for Lucien, the Emperor's brother, who had presided in the Council of Five Hundred on the 18th Brumaire; and who, by his complicity, his eloquence, and his courage, had so materially assisted Napoleon in subduing that assembly.

Lucien was the only one of the Emperor's brothers who had not accepted a throne in virtue of his blood; whether it was that he still cherished the republican feeling of his early years, or that his pride prevented him from owing his fortune to any one but himself, or that the love he bore to a beautiful and energetic woman, whom he had married against his brother's will, kept him in a disgrace honourable to himself. Lucien had only quitted his residence at Rome on the noise of Napoleon's return Misfortune and danger had reconciled him with the Emperor, and he had hastened to Paris in the hope of being a second time of assistance to him. He brought in his heart traditions of the Republic, mingled with fraternal sentiments for the master of the Empire who was so dear to him. This double position gave him at the same time the confidence of the republicans and the confidence of the Emperor. No negociator could have been more apt at reconciliation between liberty and the mitigated reign of his brother. But the assembly was repugnant to a name which bore too Napoleon-like a signification; and it was evident that it foresaw the time approaching when it would have to choose a second time between a man and the country, and that it did not wish to have any tie too indissoluble with the master; it therefore set Lucien aside.

III.

The Emperor saw both an offence and a menace in the stern choice of Lanjuinais, and gave vent to his thoughts on the subject with anger and indignation in the interior of the palace. But he did not dare to express his resentment too loudly, and he dissembled his irritation under a blunt frankness. "I am told," he said to Lanjuinais at his official audience, "that you are a partisan of the Bourbons; some tell me that you are my personal enemy, and others say that you

love your country above all. You will judge of the faith I place in these different opinions of you by the congratulations I offer you on the choice the assembly have made in electing you for their president."

M. de Lafayette, whose name had a still more republican significance, had contested with Lanjuinais the suffrages of his colleagues; and the choice and the votes had revealed the hostility of the Chamber to Napoleon. The Empire had no longer the majority, even in the opinion of the electors, of all the citizens the most favourable to the cause of Napoleon.

A more menacing symptom revealed still deeper humiliations in store for Napoleon. M. Dupin, a political orator, since become illustrious under so many reigns and republics, already famed for his eloquence at the bar at that epoch, and M. Roy, a man of much consideration by his fortune and by the credit of his name in Paris, energetically opposed the proposition of imposing an oath on the representatives; until, at least, this oath, which was prescribed by the decree of the Emperor, should be ratified by a law. This first boldness of national sovereignty and opposition, which excited the indignation of the imperialists, had been concerted by M. de Lafayette in private with a group of deputies, into whom he had endeavoured to infuse his own spirit. "What!" exclaimed Boulay de la Meurthe, one of the most stubborn councillors of state of the Empire, "must I then speak out with frankness? Well, then, there are two parties in France: the one the national party, for it comprehends the great mass of the people, and has only in view the independence and the honour of the nation; the other may be called the foreign faction!" Murmurs of indignation arose at these words; for in this insinuation was seen the foregone constitution to deprive the opposition of freedom of speech by confounding it with treason. "Yes," continued Boulay de la Meurthe with increasing energy: "yes, there are Frenchmen vile enough, and corrupt enough, to in voke the aid of the English, the Prussians, and the Russians. The Bourbons are the chiefs of this faction: it is they who, with the assistance of foreign bayonets, wish to impose upon us again a humiliating compact. We must, therefore, declare

ourselves decidedly and with unanimity. For my part, I declare that to-morrow, in presence of the Emperor and of the two chambers, at their opening, I shall take an oath of obedience to the constitutions of the Empire, and of fidelity to the Emperor!"

At this declaration, all opposition was kept in abeyance, in order to be put forth with greater effect at a more fitting opportunity, and the motion of M. Dupin was rejected.

IV

On the following day the Emperor opened the chambers, and recognised as a bad omen Lafayette, whom he had not seen for ten years, amongst the representatives deputed to receive him at the entrance of the building. Lafayotte, after his return from the dungeons of Olmutz, had often presented himself at the Tuileries. The Emperor considered his name too revolutionary for a monarchy; but he had treated him with the distinction which a name so celebrated and so unfortunate demanded, and had even granted numerous favours at his solicitation. Since then Lafayette had gone into retirement, there to await events. On this occasion the Emperor saluted and addressed a few words to him with that affability which demands a corresponding return of good feeling: "It is twelve years since I have seen you, I think," he said in a reproachful tone to Lafayette. "Yes, Sire, it is twelve years," replied Lafayette, coldly, without adding a word of regret or civility to the dryness of his reply. The Emperor passed on, and Lafayette, who observed his motions, remarked in him, he said, the unquiet and repulsive aspect of an irritated and suspicious despot. On his return the Emperor attempted again to engage Lafayette in conversation. "I find you grown young again," he said to him; "the solitude of the country has given you repose." "Yes, Sire," replied Lafayette, in the same laconic style. The future republican did not wish even to exchange smiles with the usurper of liberty.

V.

"It is now three months," said the Emperor to the assembled chambers, "since circumstances and the confidence of the people have invested me with unlimited power; and this day I have come to accomplish the most urgent duty of my heart; I am going to commence the constitutional monarchy. Men are too powerless to command the future: institutions alone fix the destinies of nations. Our institutions are too much scattered; one of our most important occupations will be to unite them in one single frame, and to arrange them under one single thought. This work will recommend the present epoch to future generations.

"A formidable coalition of kings have a design upon our independence! Their armies are arriving on our frontiers, and blood has already been shed at sea in time of peace. It is possible, therefore, that my first duty as a sovereign may call me soon to the head of the nation's children to combat for the country. The army and I will do our duty. Yours be the task, peers and representatives, to give to the nation an example of confidence, of energy, and of patriotism; and like the senate of the great nations of antiquity, resolve to die rather than survive the dishonour and the disgrace of France. The sacred cause of the country will triumph!"

The chambers replied by addresses that breathed more a distrust of tyranny, than warlike enthusiasm at this speech; and Napoleon, hurt by their suspicions, replied to them with an air of stern sorrow. "The seductions of prosperity are not the dangers that menace us at present, for the foreigners wish to make us pass under the *Caudine forks*. I shall depart to-night to join the army. May the constitution be our polar star in these stormy times. Every political discussion which has a tendency to diminish confidence, directly or indirectly, would be a misfortune for the state. Let us not imitate the Greeks of the Lower Empire, who, pressed on all sides by barbarians, rendered themselves the laughing-stock of posterity, by occupying themselves with abstract discussions at the

moment that the battering-ram was thundering at their gates. Aid me to save the country!"

VI.

In the features of the peers and representatives he read the foreboding of the agitations and infidelities which were about to profit by his absence, should the war leave an interval between his departure and his victorious return. He knew that Fouché, manœuvring with the royalists at Ghent and with the republicans of the assembly at Paris, left no security to his government. He would have gladly got rid of him, but he did not dare to withdraw this pledge given by him to liberal opinions. His anger was increased by his weakness, and a few hours before his departure for the army he said to Fouché "I know that you are a traitor I could send you to the scaffold, and all the world would applaud me; but others will have this office You think you govern me, but I shall prove to you that you do not weigh so much as a hair in the balance of my destiny!" Words like these, spoken to a man to whose intrigues Paris and all France were left after having insulted and threatened without striking him, attested the delirium of impotence They would have made a traitor of this minister if he had not been one already. Napoleon no longer possessed any self command, Fouché, however, did: he affected to see in these accusations and ebullitions of violence only the unjust ill-temper of a master embittered by the embarrassment of his situation. "The Emperor ill-treats me," he said with apparent indifference, on going out to one of his confidants whom he knew to be a confidant also of Napoleon; "he is exasperated by resistance, and accuses me with his difficulties: he does not sufficiently know that I am strong through public opinion alone. I could to-morrow make five-and twenty heads fall, which public opinion has given to me; but I could not with impunity arrest for four-and-twenty hours one single man who is protected against him by public opinion!" These words, which Fouché knew must be reported to the Emperor, contained an implied menace in return for an open threat, plainly saying to Napoleon:

"You are not what you still believe yourself to be: public opinion is henceforth above you, and I am more supported by it than you are yourself." It may thus be seen to what a conviction of his real weakness had fallen a man who had only reascended the throne to feel it vacillate and sink beneath him.

VII.

He endeavoured to neutralize the dangers of this position of Paris and of the chambers during his absence, by forming, as in 1814, a provisional government, equal, or superior to the council of ministers, to counterbalance Carnot, or Fouché. His brother Joseph, formerly King of Spain, was appointed by him president of this council, the presage of weakness or of ruin, as it had been in 1814. The Emperor had better hopes from his brother Lucien, the strength and resistance of whose character he had experienced on the 18th Brumaire, and he appointed him a member of the council. He also admitted in it his most devoted partisans of the two chambers and of the Council of State, Defermon, Regnault de Saint-Jean d'Angely, Boulay de la Meurthe, Merlin de Douai, all men sprung from the revolution, but bound up with the Empire in such a manner that there was neither refuge nor honour for them either in the Republic or the Restoration. The Emperor, to explain this creation, in reality an unconstitutional superfluity under a responsible government, affected to say that his ministers had neither sufficiently the habit of parliamentary discussions, nor indeed eloquence enough to appear before the chambers; and that it was necessary to give them as auxiliaries those orators of the Council of State well practised in debate. Nobody, however, was deceived: his real motive was the dread he entertained of his own ministry, and above all, of Carnot and Fouché. He did not wish that these two men, already dear to the liberal party, should increase their popularity at the expense of his own, by speaking before the two chambers. Above all, he wished to counterbalance one of these governments by the other, in the event of Fouché's manœuvres and disaffection menacing his power, whilst he should be fighting at a distance

from Paris. Even this prudence weakened him, for it betrayed in him a suspicion against the chambers and a feeling of his own weakness. This provisional government, altogether personal, governed by his family, was only a cause of suspicion to public opinion, of irritation for the assembly, and of distrust of his ministers. Unskilful prudence, which betrayed a distrust in itself by exhibiting a distrust in others.

VIII.

The Emperor, admirably seconded by Marshal Davoust, his minister of war, threw with him during the night one last look upon the statement of the forces which he had prepared to make a stand against Europe. This was by no means reassuring; but he reckoned on one of those chances of war which his military genius knew how to change to certainty every time that he could disconcert the enemy by outstripping him.

France, as we have seen, had not risen *en masse.* The south remained almost entirely motionless in the expectation of events; the west was in a state of fermentation, but it was with hatred against Napoleon, and love for the Bourbons; and the government took very good care not to excite these provinces by summoning their male population to fight against the King: it was enough to secure their neutrality. Alsatia, Franche-Comté, the centre, and the departments around Paris had alone furnished some battalions of mobilised volunteers and old soldiers discharged from the service, to form the garrisons of the fortified places. The north, a patriotic and warlike people, was divided between its predilection for the Bourbons, and its generous passion for the independence of the soil. The country had numerous defenders there, and the Emperor but few partisans. Paris reckoned in its faubourgs 30,000 or 40,000 fédérés, people and artisans, calling loudly for chiefs and arms, and amongst whom a government more truly popular might have recruited second battalions as in 1792; but Napoleon feared that he would arm the revolution in giving arms to this portion of the people.

He was thinking of his return, and did not wish to leave, or to find again in his capital, an army of enthusiasm, which might serve as a rallying point to opinions hostile to his government. He preferred to disarm the country of this convulsive force than to arm liberty. Moreover, he had little faith in the soundness of these levies in mass, in the face of troops disciplined and inured to war, like those he had to contend with. One hundred thousand of those old soldiers of the line and of his guard, broken-in to his hand, manageable as his own thoughts, and firm as his own soul, appeared to him preferable to those multitudes of men which the soil produces in a day of enthusiasm, and devours in a day of reverses. He only reckoned, therefore, on his regular army; but, threatened at once on every side, he could not assemble them on one single point without weakening them on all the others; and if he attempted to oppose on every point, he was on every point weak and insufficient. Thence arose the part he adopted of uniting all his disposable forces under his own hand, and leaving to his generals nothing but the names and shadows of armies, which could only serve to reassure for a few days the eye and the imagination of France.

IX.

Marshal Suchet, a man of a cold and pensive disposition, consummate in the administration of war, imperturbable to events, and experienced in mountain warfare, was entrusted with the defence of Lyons, of which he was a native, and of the provinces to the eastward, by the people of which he was esteemed and beloved. He had no more than seven or eight thousand soldiers of the line, and twelve or fifteen thousand National Guards to cover sixty leagues of the French side of the Alps, Savoy, the Jura, and Geneva; and to defend the passes of Mount Cenis, the Simplon, and Mount Genevra. Should he be driven from these positions he was to fall back upon Lyons, Macon, and Chalons, and to defend the line of the Saône. Lyons, changed into a seat of war, was fortified in the rear of Suchet, to give

a *point d'appui* to his army against invasion by the two roads from the south.

Lecourbe, the old friend and emulator of Moreau, who had been long banished in disgrace and inaction, had recovered, in the extremity of the peril, the forced confidence of Napoleon. A republican general, enjoying in the Jura, his native place, the old popularity of his name, he received the command of that mountainous province, which lies midway between the Rhine and the Alps, and between Alsatia and the Saône. His whole army consisted only of some battalions which he had raised in the country, and which he had concentrated at Béfort. These battalions, firm enough behind its walls were incapable of coping with an enemy in the field. It was the name of an army and a general, which would make a show upon paper, and impose on the foreign powers at a distance; but in reality it was only a precarious and confused assemblage, the nucleus of an army to be created if events allowed time for its organisation and instruction.

Lecourbe thus connected, by a fiction rather than reality, the army of Suchet with the army of the Rhine. Molitor and Rapp, two of the most intrepid and most consummate generals of the Empire, commanded this army of the Rhine; the name of which caused its weakness to be lost sight of. It was, in fact, only an outpost composed of about 10,000 soldiers, and some thousands of brave Alsatian volunteers, stationed at the entrance of the passes which penetrate this national rampart of the Vosges and the mountains of Alsatia, from Huninguen to the celebrated lines of Weissemburg, the Thermopylæ of France.

Marshal Brune occupied Marseilles with some regiments, rather to keep down than to defend this royalist and effervescing portion of the south.

General Clausel, an enterprising man and a negociator, capable at once of handling a body of soldiers, or of winning over a population, commanded at Bordeaux, but recently reconquered from the Duchess d'Angoulême, and thence observed with inquietude the scarcely quelled commotions of La Vendée. He required no efforts from these provinces for

the repudiated cause of Napoleon; he only demanded of them time, in order that the cause of Napoleon and the Bourbons might be decided elsewhere.

General Decaen kept down Toulouse with as small a force, and by a similar system of compromise.

General Lamarque, still nearer to Paris and the north, was observing the west, at the head of 18,000 men. The truce with the Vendéans allowed him when necessary to fall back upon the army of the Emperor, and to cover Paris through Normandy.

It will be seen that with the exception of these 18,000 men of Lamarque, still necessary to intimidate royalism in the west, the Emperor could not detach a single man from the feeble camps which covered France, either to increase his own force, or to fall back upon in case of a reverse. His own fate and that of France were entirely dependent on the grand army.

X.

Even this was nothing but a name for a sovereign and a general who had led 700,000 soldiers into Russia, and 300,000 to Austerlitz and to Wagram. His official statements and his journals represented it at 280,000 men; but in this number he included 100,000 volunteer National Guards, mobilised, of the provinces of the centre and of Paris, and 60,000 troops of the line, which he had ordered to be levied and armed, and which he stationed, as an army of reserve, between Laon and Paris. These levies had not been made, and these armaments were not ready. The army of reserve existed only in his head; there was none upon the soil. These 280,000 men were therefore reduced to 120,000, stationed silently and in succession between Paris and Belgium; ready to issue from their cantonments at the first signal from the Emperor, to form under his hand a most formidable line of battle on those fields of Fleurus and Jemappe, the first rock of the coalition under Jourdan and under Dumouriez.

It was composed of five divisions of infantry, of four bodies of cavalry, and an artillery of 300 pieces of cannon

Drouet d'Erlon concentrated under his command the first division of infantry at Valenciennes, Reille the second at Maubeuge, Vaudamme the third at Marienburg, Gerard the fourth at Rocroy, and Lobau the fifth at Avesnes. Marshal Grouchy commanded the cavalry, 30,000 strong; under him Excelmans, Milhaud, Pajol, and Kellermann commanded each one of the four divisions of this cavalry. The Imperial Guard, which still numbered 22,000 infantry and 4,000 cavalry, completed the grand army. This comprised all the generals, all the colonels, and all the officers whose names had become great for twenty years, in the fire and smoke of our wars, all the corps renowned for their firmness, everything that remained of the chosen soldiers of our victories and our disasters, the nucleus, the heart, and the arm of that military France levied in 1792, inured to war during twenty campaigns, inaccessible to intimidation from superiority of number, confident in itself, confident in its chief, proud of his name; burning to avenge its reverses, it hastened at the voice of its Emperor, accepting with enthusiasm the defiance of Europe, resolved to show to France that if it had failed in its duty to the country in imposing upon it, by its defection, a chief who was no longer acceptable to the country, the army would at least know how to justify its fault by its constancy in defending him. Every soldier made, therefore, so to speak, his own personal cause of the cause of Napoleon. The spirit which animated the grand army was not merely patriotism, it was rage, and also remorse; and with such men Napoleon might defy at the same time Europe and France, for each of these soldiers made common cause with him, and identified himself with his general.

XI.

The forces of the coalition were divided into three principal armies, connected with each other by secondary *corps d'armée*. These three columns, marching from three points of the circumference, tended by their direction to an approximation of each other on reaching France, and to a concentration after marching through it. upon Paris A fourth army, that of

Russia, more retarded than the rest by distance, formed the reserve of this European *levée en masse*. The Prince of Schwartzenberg commanded the army of the Upper Rhine, numbering 260,000 men, almost all Austrians, or from the hereditary states of the Empire. The Prussian army, composed of 100,000 fighting men, advanced upon the Meuse; Blucher, already a conqueror, commanded it. This was called the army of the Lower Rhine, and touched Belgium on its right. The English, Dutch, and Belgian army, numbered about 100,000 men also, but of different races, and without unity of language, of soul, or of spirit: English, Belgians, Hanoverians, Dutch, Germans, a strangely assorted mass, most difficult to manage and manœuvre. Lord Wellington, as great in the cabinet as in the field, at once a soldier and a negociator, already great from the *prestige* and the authority of his seven years' campaigns in Spain, commanded this army of auxiliaries.

The Russian army of reserve numbered 180,000 men: it was commanded by General Barclay de Tolly, and was to cross the Rhine in front of Rapp and Molitor, between the Austrian and Prussian armies, as soon as it should be in line with these two wings of the coalition.

Finally, 60,000 Germans, Italians, and Piedmontese were under arms at the foot of the Alps, and were beginning to cross them in front of Suchet. They were commanded by General Frimont.

These comprised in all 700,000 fighting men; Switzerland also, favourable to the coalition, as it had been in 1814, exposed France on its own frontier, as it has always done in its extremities, and offered 30,000 auxiliaries to the enemy. A timid and venal government, which borrows the support of the strongest in its personal quarrels, and which, when danger threatens its neighbours, never itself supports any but the conqueror. 120,000 men against 730,000, to defend a divided nation, one-half of whose heart was with its legitimate royalty in the enemy's camp; such, then, was the situation of France the day Napoleon was going to battle, in spite of her, and less for her than for himself.

XII.

Never had Napoleon greater occasion for devotedness, for counsel, and for courage, to sustain his resolution, and to second his grand designs. Never had these more completely failed him.

Prince Eugene, his adopted son, loaded with affection and confidence by the Emperor of Russia, at Vienna, and expecting all his fortune from the Congress, lived retired in Germany, at the court of the King of Wirtemberg, his father-in-law, to contemplate from thence, without mingling even in wish in the last struggle of the protector of his youth.

Murat, that flame of the battle-field, whose presence alone increased tenfold the ardour of the French cavalry, and who, towards the close of the battle, always won victory at a gallop, had embarked as a fugitive, on board a coasting vessel, in the night, from the beach of the little isle of Ischia, followed only by his nephew and that paladin of Naples, the valiant Duke of Rocca Romana. He landed at Cannes, and lived retired in a country house in the neighbourhood of Toulon, brooding over his errors, imploring pardon of the Emperor, and shuddering to hear the sound of war without being able to throw himself into the midst of it; the most unfortunate of friends, the most humbled of men. Napoleon had made Fouché write to him that he would consent to ignore his presence in that France which he had betrayed by his weakness; that he would give him an asylum, but that he would not suffer him to appear at his court or his army. A merited but fatal rigour, which deprived the army of a hero, and the Emperor of a friend. The bitterness of Murat's remorse had sufficiently atoned for his errors and his false policy. He burned to win his pardon by his exploits.

Lannes was dead; Bessières had been killed by a cannon ball; Duroc had fallen, struck to death, at the feet of his master; Berthier, that indefatigable Hephestion of the Emperor's bivouacs, had fled to Bamberg. that he might neither betray Louis XVIII., nor hear the summons of his old master.

Marmont, at Ghent, attached himself more and more to the only cause which now remained for him to serve, that he might not be twice a traitor.

Ney was discontented with himself, uneasy, often irritated, and reflecting back upon the Emperor the resentment he experienced at the uncertainty of his mind and his position.

Oudinot and Macdonald had withdrawn, to remain faithful to the Bourbons, whose cause Napoleon himself had recommended them to embrace. Masséna had grown old; Bernadotte was seated upon a throne, giving his sympathies, his counsels, and his armies, to the enemies of France.

Marshal Soult, the Wellington of France, at once a great minister of war and great commander in the field, had retired to a distance on the return of Napoleon, as if to expiate the services that he had offered to the royalist cause during his ministry under the Bourbons. The Emperor having summoned him, the marshal had hastened to his side, and had been appointed to the rank of major-general, left vacant by Berthier, that is to say, second only to the Emperor in the campaign just about to open.

But how could that confidence and intimacy so necessary between the head and the hand, exist satisfactorily between a general who had issued such insulting proclamations against his old chief, and that chief who was indebted to fortune alone for the return of his general?

All was isolation or distrust around Napoleon, both as regarded his staff and his councils. This year's absence had made sad havoc amongst his followers. His palace was in appearance no less a desert than his head quarters. No more private intimacies, no more tried affections, no more hopes or fortunes to dispense, no more hearts! That of Josephine, the repudiated, though still honoured wife, was broken by the blows of adversity in 1814—she died at Malmaison during the exile of Elba. Marie-Louise and her son were the prisoners of Europe at Schœnbrunn; while the Emperor's sisters, fallen from the thrones to which he had raised them, were wanderers in foreign lands.

Hortensia Beauharnais, the deposed queen of Holland

whom he loved like a daughter, with all the tender recollections of his happiest days, had, it was said, powerfully assisted his return; but she had immediately after retired, lest the second fall of the Empire might overwhelm her whole house in its ruins. His ministers were some of them indifferent, and others his secret enemies. In short, this second throne isolated him from his court, from his army, and from France, as from the Empire. He was front to front with his destiny.

Marshal Davoust, whom he had chosen for his minister of war, a man of rough frankness, of high capabilities, and of an upright heart, remained personally attached to him. He was one of those characters who do not prostrate themselves before grandeur, but who are stanch in adversity. He had often discontented the Emperor by his murmurs and his harsh admonitions in the last campaigns of Russia and Germany, but the loss of favour had not driven him to ingratitude. Davoust had not been employed by the Bourbons in 1814. During Napoleon's last night at Paris he supplicated him, with the most earnest entreaties, to appoint him his major-general in place of Soult.

"Soult," he said to the Emperor, "has talents which I acknowledge and admire, in common with all military men. I do not suspect his fidelity to the new cause that he has embraced, because it is now the cause of the country; he is one of those men who change with events, without betraying the cause they embrace so long as it is that of their country. But the army, witness of his recent vicissitudes, and of his glowing demonstrations of love for the Bourbons, will see him with distrust, between them and you, opposed to the cause which he served yesterday, and which he may serve again to-morrow. The suspicion of treason, the source of weakness and hesitation of armies, will hover at his aspect over the minds of generals and soldiers, and orders will be executed with less confidence which may be suspected of a double meaning; distrust will produce disobedience or irresolution. I am, perhaps, less illustrious, but I shall appear more exclusively devoted to our cause and to that of the army. The troops all bear me good will for not having contributed to their humiliation, during your absence. The ministry of war is an important and superior post to that of

major-general. I am not afraid of descending from it to serve my country; moreover, France is where you are. The ministry of war has few duties to perform during the campaign, for France has nothing more to give; everything is in the field. Appoint Masséna to my place; an old man whose hand is benumbed with age, but whose name is popular at Paris, as a souvenir of our victories. Join to it the command in chief of the National Guards of the capital; Masséna will thus be answerable to you for the interior and for Paris, whilst your genius and my zeal will answer for the campaign and the frontiers!"

The Emperor was touched, but inflexible; he trembled for Paris, and wished to leave there a representative sure and energetic, to counterbalance his enemies. Davoust remained in spite of himself. Soult was maintained in his post of major-general. He commenced his functions by an order of the day to the army, a laudatory disavowal of the anti-Napoleon proclamations with which, a few weeks before, he had flattered the Bourbons and insulted the reign of the Emperor; whether it was that he despised those vain formulas with which courtiers are wont to salute by turns revolutions when accomplished, or that the servility so common to the epoch was still more inveterate amongst military men than civilians.

XIII.

Two plans of campaign offered themselves to the mind of the Emperor, as in 1814. To await the enemy in the heart of France, by strongly concentrating the army around Paris;—or to check him before he should have crossed the frontiers; fight on a chosen battle-field, one or two of those armies which were spread over a vast circumference; vanquish it; cut it off from the other armies; return with all his disposable forces upon another body of the allied powers; measure his strength again with nearly equal numbers with the enemy, thus isolated and disconcerted by the defeat of its auxiliaries; then pass on to a third; break the union of all, damp their spirit, penetrate their weak points, drive back the conquered, offer truces,

negociate separate peaces, and consolidate and secure France behind him by the reaction of his victory.

The first of these plans, almost sure of success in 1814, if the Emperor had recalled at the same time to the interior of France the armies uselessly scattered in Spain, in Italy, in the garrisons of Germany, and in Holland, would evidently be fatal in 1815. These armies no longer existing, the Emperor was reduced to his own resources; France, depressed and discontented, invaded on every side by the allied armies, would have resumed, without their aid, the white flag and the government of the King. Napoleon, overwhelmed by 700,000 men around Paris, harassed on the Loire by the royalist departments of the west, would have been a prisoner in his own Empire. This plan might be military, but it evidently was not politic. It is astounding that a military genius so acute as that of Marshal Soult should have counselled the Emperor to adopt it. He mistook the year. The Emperor rejected it and followed his own, which was approved by all the other generals of his council. He failed, but by the fortune of arms; the first plan would have failed even in the natural course of things. Fortune might not favour the design, but genius was not wanting to it.

To concentrate the grand army on the banks of the Sambre, push it forward resolutely on Charleroi, attack the Prussians, at the point of junction where their right wing extended to the left wing of Wellington's army, drive them back upon Luxembourg, penetrate Belgium, manœuvre in the rich plains of an almost level country, leave an imposing force in front of Blucher to prevent him from taking the Emperor in flank, throw himself to the left, and march upon Brussels and upon Wellington, crush the English army, return afterwards as conqueror upon the two armies of the lower and central Rhine, fight and conquer again the shaken coalition of these two first armies—such was this plan, the only one suited to the internal state of France, to the disproportioned number of the French army, to the extended positions of the enemy, to the natural genius of the Emperor and his soldiers, and finally, to the genius of impetuosity and despair.

XIV.

Towards daybreak of the 12th of June, 1815, Napoleon quitted the palace of the Tuileries, never again to re-enter it, sprang into his travelling carriage, recommending once more to his confidants, union, zeal, and energy, and proceeded, without stopping, as far as Avesnes, the extreme frontier of France and Belgium. He left behind him the anxieties, suspicions, bickerings, infidelities, and treasons, with which he had been beset from the commencement of this self-willed Empire, which was escaping from his hands in the interior, a doubtful assembly in the Chamber of Peers, a hostile one in the Chamber of Deputies, ministers either enemies or conspirators, an exhausted country, and a turbulent capital. But he threw himself with confidence into the midst of his army, his real people, his true capital. It would give him back everything if it only gave him a victory. He reckoned upon this victory to unravel every difficulty abroad, and to subdue all obstacles at home. He had summed up his thoughts the evening before in his reply to one of his intimates, who had counselled him to get rid of Fouché before his departure. "I am going to join the army," he replied. "If I lose the game what good will the blood of this man do me? His execution will have no object; but if I gain it, the courier that brings the news will be the bearer also of the order for his arrest and trial; and the public criers when announcing the following day in the streets the triumph of our arms, will acquaint the people at the same time with the condemnation and execution of Fouché, as a traitor to his country. The news will be lost amidst the cries of victory; not a soul will murmur at the event."

Thus he was not afraid to acknowledge that one of his ministers was more powerful than himself, in public opinion, and that this opinion protected against him his most dangerous enemies. His dictatorship was nothing but a name; his government, since his return, was, in reality, only a triumvirate, in which the party of the Empire was already subordi-

nate to the two others; the party of the nation being personified in Carnot, that of intrigue represented by Fouché. Reduced to the necessity of temporising with the one, and of menacing the other, without daring to strike, he hastened to call, for the second time, to his assistance, the military party, and to regain in the plains of Belgium that throne of glory, from which three years of defeat had thrown him lower than his accomplices of 1815. He was still Emperor in name, but less master than Fouché.

Fouché knew the intentions of the Emperor, and the fate that awaited him, if Napoleon, as conqueror, should regain the ascendant which he now disputed with him. He displayed, it must be acknowledged, a rare audacity, and an energetic intrepidity in the part he was playing. His head was endangered every day by his intrigues. It might have fallen at the first movement of shame or rage on the part of Napoleon. He seemed to have steeped his character in the tragedies of the convention, and to be playing with death suspended at the word of the master, as he had played with execution suspended at a gesture from Robespierre. Of all the survivors of that epoch he alone showed that he was not exhausted, or weary of temerity. Thrown by his bold manœuvre, on the one side between tyranny seeking to re-establish itself, and liberty striving to revive; and on the other, between Napoleon, ready to sacrifice the country to his interest, and France, which was not willing to sacrifice itself totally for one man; Fouché intimidated the Emperor, flattered the republicans, reassured France, held out a signal to Europe, encouraged Louis XVIII., negociated with the foreign courts, corresponded by signs and hints with M. de Talleyrand, and by his attitude kept all in suspense. A difficult and gigantic part, at once elevated and low, but tremendous—and one to which history has not hitherto paid sufficient attention; a part devoid of nobleness, but not of patriotism or moral courage, in which a subject placed himself on a level with his master, a minister above his sovereign, an old pro-consul of the Reign of Terror above the kings whom he had punished, and whom he was going to recall while claiming their gratitude: the arbiter of the Empire, of the Restoration, or of liberty, but arbiter

through duplicity! Such a part is not to be found in history, except amongst the eunuchs, masters of their masters under the lower empire at Byzantium, or amongst the mayors of the palace of the kings of the early French monarchy. The Cardinal de Retz, in modern times, had something of this genius of intrigue applied to affairs of state. But Fouché was a Cardinal de Retz of a more tragic caste, struggling with men and events more imposing than those of the Fronde, and moving thrones, congresses, and empires with the same threads with which his prototype only moved factions. History, whilst condemning Fouché, cannot refuse to him, during this period of the "hundred days," a boldness of attitude, a superiority in the management of parties, and a greatness in intrigue, which would place him in the rank of the first statesmen of his age, if modern history recognised real statesmen without dignity of character, and without virtue.

Napoleon, who had stopped a few hours at Soissons and at Laon, to bestow a glance at the fortifications of these two cities, the eventual support of a retreat, arrived on the 13th at Avesnes, in the heart of his grand army. He found himself once more an Emperor amidst the acclamations of his soldiers.

BOOK TWENTY-FIFTH.

The 14th June—The Emperor's Order of the Day to his Army—His dispositions—Position of the English and Prussian Armies—Plan of Napoleon—The 15th June—The Army passes the frontier—March of General Gérard on Charleroi—Defection of Bourmont—Passage of the Sambre—Entry of Napoleon into Charleroi—Arrival of Ney—Action with the Prussians—New disposition of the French Army—The 16th June—Orders to Ney—Napoleon encounters Blucher beyond Fleurus—Fresh orders—Battle of Ligny—Inaction of Wellington at Brussels till the 15th—Action of Quatre-Bras—Double movement of Drouet d'Erlon—Distrust of the French Army—Napoleon's orders to Ney—The 17th June—The Emperor marches against the English — Fresh orders — Grouchy pursues the Prussians, and halts at Gembloux—Napoleon at Quatre-Bras—Meeting of the Emperor and Ney—Field of Battle of Waterloo—Napoleon halts at Planchenoit—His dispositions—First order to Grouchy—The 18th June—March of the French Army against the English—Enthusiasm of the Army at the sight of Napoleon—Respective situations of the French and English Armies—Second order to Grouchy—Attack on the English Army—Attack on and action at Hougoumont—Attack by Ney on the centre of the English Army at Mont-Saint-Jean—Capture of La Haie-Sainte—Appearance of the Army of Bulow on the right of Napoleon—Third order to Grouchy—Capture of a part of Mont-Saint-Jean—Panic of the English Army—Resistance of Wellington—Charge of the English cavalry on the artillery of Ney—Charge of Milhaut's cuirassiers on the summit of Mont Saint-Jean—Hopes of Victory—Flight of the peasantry and the wounded towards Brussels—Panic at Brussels—State of the battle—Inaction of Marshal Grouchy—His march on Wavres—Arrival of Bulow at St. Lambert—Action of Planchenoit—Charge of the French cavalry on the English—Attack of the Guard—Arrival of Blucher—Dejection of Napoleon—Defeat of the French Army—Conclusion.

I.

Napoleon was determined not to check the enthusiasm which his presence ever created in his camp, where his appearance was

at all times a presage of a battle and a victory. He brought to his soldiers from Paris one of those "orders of the day" which he dictated beforehand to the principal officers of his staff, and which constituted his dialogue with his army. No one better understood the language of those written harangues which give the impulse to vast bodies of disciplined men, and on which his name, as it were, affixed the stamp of futurity. He also affected with superstitious care a coincidence between the day of his arrival at the army and the battles he intended to fight, with one of the anniversaries of those great actions which were the Iliad of his camp; as if desirous of invoking fortune to be faithful to herself, by giving him one more victory on the day she had already made him a conqueror.

"Soldiers!" thus began the order of the day, "this is the anniversary of Marengo and of Friedland, which twice decided the destiny of Europe. Then, as after Austerlitz, and after Wagram, we were too generous! We confided in the protestations, and the oaths of the princes whom we suffered to remain upon their thrones: notwithstanding which, they have now coalesced among themselves, aiming at the independence and the most sacred rights of France; and having commenced the most unjust of aggressions. Let us march, then, to meet them! Are we no longer the same men?

"Soldiers! At Jena, against these identical Prussians, who are now so arrogant, you were only one against three! At Montmirail, you were only one against six!

"The Saxons, the Belgians, the Hanoverians, and the soldiers of the confederation of the Rhine, bewail the necessity of lending their arms to the cause of princes who are the enemies of justice and the rights of nations. They know that this coalition is insatiable; and that after having devoured 12,000,000 of Poles, 12,000,000 of Italians, 1,000,000 of Saxons, and 6,000,000 of Belgians, it will also devour the second class states of Germany.

"Fools that they are! A moment of prosperity has blinded them; but the oppression and humiliation of the French people are beyond their power. If they enter France, there they will find their tomb!

"Soldiers! We have forced marches to make, battles to wage, perils to encounter; but with constancy the victory will be ours. The rights, the honour, and the happiness of our country will be recovered.

"For every Frenchman who has a heart, the moment has now arrived either to conquer or perish!"

II.

These words were repeated by the army with daring enthusiasm. The more it felt itself isolated in France, the prouder it became of fighting alone for the country it longed to avenge, and for the Emperor it had crowned in spite of France. It burned to redeem its fault by victory; and it would have defied the whole coalition unaided. Old and young soldiers had but one soul. Theirs was no longer the courage of hope with which Napoleon had inspired these veteran bands in Italy, in Egypt, and in Germany; it was the less noisy, but more resolute courage of despair. The generals and officers alone calculated the numbers of the enemy they were going to fight, but the soldiers took no account of them. They had forgotten 1812, 1813, and 1814; the name of the Emperor had blotted out those sinister recollections. They firmly believed that exile had rendered him invincible. He was no longer in their eyes the man of Moscow, of Leipsic, and of Fontainebleau, but of Marengo and of Austerlitz. They were quite certain of inscribing another immortal name in the catalogue of the battles of the Empire.

But Napoleon missed the greatest of his generals to whom he had been long accustomed. Almost all his *corps d'armée* were commanded by generals, brave and illustrious, it is true, but of the second class; and the names of their chiefs no longer fascinated the imaginations of the soldiers. Marshal Soult, it is true, was with the Emperor, but his name inspired the superior officers of the army with as much distrust as respect; so much had he been altered by the Restoration. There were no longer any marshals at the heads of *corps d'armée*, with the exception of Grouchy, recently promoted: Napoleon felt this

He summoned Mortier and Ney, the latter of whom had retired in discontent to his estate of Coudreaux.

He conferred upon Mortier the command of the 20,000 men of his Imperial Guard. The other marshals were either superannuated, disaffected, or worn out in the toils of war; and the Emperor could not pardon the abatement of their ardour during the last few years. "They will work no more," he exclaimed, "they must now have sumptuous hotels, and beds of down, in place of the straw of our bivouacs; and I must replace them with younger men whom I have not yet enriched." He forgot that an epoch cannot be renewed. The first warlike generation which had sprung from the revolution was all mowed down

Ney and Mortier arrived at head-quarters as soon as himself. Mortier, cold and intrepid as duty; Ney, fluctuating between his ardour and his remorse; at all times the first soldier of the French army, but fitter henceforward by the uneasiness of his heart to rush upon death than to secure victory.

The two armies of the enemy now in front of Napoleon were, as we have seen before, on the left the army of Lord Wellington, 100,000 strong, commanded under him by the Prince of Orange, Lord Hill, and the Earl of Uxbridge.

The Prussian army of Blucher, numbering about 130,000 men, were commanded by Generals Ziethen, Pirch, Thielman, and Bulow.

These two armies, comprising thus 230,000 men against 120,000, were by no means ready for action on the 14th of June. There was a distance of several leagues between them; and they were waiting, in a somewhat negligent manner, the coming up into line of the other allied armies, and the Russian reserve, and the entrance of the Austrians under Schwartzenberg into France, as a signal for their advance. They never once suspected the projects of the Emperor; they were even ignorant of his departure from Paris, and his presence at Avesnes; nothing was stirring before them in the French cantonments, and they expected that many days would still elapse before they were called upon to act They were not con-

centrated, in short, either for march or for action. This profound ignorance in which the Prussian and English armies were two days before the battle, proves that the secret of the Emperor's plans, and those of his cabinet, had not transpired; and that Fouché, who was preparing in case of a reverse to give up the man Napoleon, would not at least give up in him the general and the blood of the soldiers of France. This is the truth.

III.

Napoleon, who had foreseen everything at Paris, was confirmed in the justness of his military conceptions on approaching the field of battle. The negligence and scattered state of the army of Wellington, who required two or three days to concentrate his troops on the left, gave the Emperor the time that was strictly necessary to attack, fight, and drive back the army of Blucher, before the English army could get within reach of the first battle. The impetuous character, and rash and adventurous bravery of Blucher, precious qualities in the leader of an advanced guard, but fatal in a manœuvring general, were favourable to the Emperor under the circum stances. He foresaw, judging from Blucher's character, that the Prussian army, carried away by the impetuosity of its chief, would fail in prudence, and not fall back, without fighting, upon Wellington; but that it would accept a battle single-handed, with an equal or even an inferior force to the enemy, rather than seem to hesitate or temporise before the French The slow, sure, and temporising genius of Wellington, on the contrary, gave him confidence with respect to the English; for he felt assured from the information of his spies in Belgium, that this general would not make a forward movement in aid of Blucher, until he had assembled, concentrated, and disposed all his scattered divisions. Upwards of eight-and-forty hours were necessary to effect this concentration, and more than two marches to traverse obliquely the sixteen leagues which lay between Brussels and the head-quarters of Blucher.

This was time enough for two victories and a whole cam paign for the rapid genius of Napoleon. Fortune gave him on

the very first day the manœuvre that he liked above all others, and which he had so often made use of in all his wars, the sudden irruption with his united forces upon the centre of the enemy's army, as if, to divide it into two trunks, and crush it with both his arms, while it could only resist him with one. But this daring and desperate exploit, which almost always succeeded with him, required well-seasoned troops, firm and imperturbable like himself, under a double fire. He had them on this occasion in his grand army of chosen men, every battalion of which had a soul equal to the utmost extremity of this final struggle; he did not, therefore, hesitate a single day.

IV.

On the 13th June, one hour after his arrival at Avesnes, the officers of the Emperor's staff hastened to distribute to the different commandants of divisions of the grand army, the orders to break ground, to march upon their respective positions from the extreme frontier, and to encamp there. This was the prelude of the movement: the Emperor himself approaching the centre of his line, moved his head-quarters on the evening of the 14th to Beaumont. From thence he issued during the night the general order of the movement to each division and *corps d'armée*. The hour, the direction, and the object of each of these movements had been calculated on the map, by distances with the compass, and according to the difficulties or facilities of the route, so that each division, according to the greater or less space it had to traverse, marched from its bivouac at different hours, to support the divisions in advance to the right and left, and to arrive at the same moment at their proper position. A vast line of battle in march, ready to fight at every step it took upon an enemy's soil.

General Gérard, according to this order of movement, was the first to march from the environs of Philippeville, and to converge towards Charleroi. A remarkable defection signalised the first movement of this *corps d'armée* in advance. General Bourmont commanded one of the divisions of Gérard. We have before seen the hesitation of this old Vendéan

chief at the moment that Marshal Ney, whose second in command he was, was himself wavering at Lons-le-Saulnier, between his duty and his weakness. Bourmont had not exerted himself sufficiently to deter him from this fatal lapse of honour: he had, however, quitted the marshal during his march to Paris, ashamed of proceeding thus in opposition to the cause of his early exploits. But after the entrance of Bonaparte into Paris, Bourmont, for a moment undecided, had again solicited a command in the grand army. Napoleon, who distrusted him, not as a soldier but as a royalist, had refused, but the entreaties of Marshal Ney, and the assurances of Gérard, who had answered for him to the Emperor, had surmounted the objections of Napoleon.

Bourmont had received the command of the third division of Gérard. Without doubt he was too brave to have premeditated, on assuming this command, the treachery he committed; but his want of firmness had thrown him, as a similar weakness had thrown Ney two months before, into one of those ambiguous situations beyond the control of weak characters; where the heart is on one side and honour on the other, and where the man is unfaithful to both and to himself at the same time, for want of having decidedly chosen his party and his position. Remorse for having embraced the cause of the Emperor seized on Bourmont at sight of his old colours mingled with the colours of the coalition. He trembled at being confounded by the King whom he had served, and by his old military companions of La Vendée, with the generals of Napoleon who were contending with them for the country and the throne. He did not wish to betray, therefore he deserted; but he deserted to the enemy, and in face of the enemy in the field.

Such a defection, without intending to betray, in effect did so; for it spread uncertainty and suspicion through the army which Bourmont abandoned on the eve of battle. It made every soldier look upon his general as a traitor, and every general see a traitor in his companion: it shook everything in the French camp, and encouraged everything in that of the enemy; it struck a note of alarm and distrust in every heart.

Accompanied by Adjutant Commandant Clouet, an officer avowedly royalist, who had neither the personal engagements nor responsibility of command of Bourmont, by the *chef d'escadron* Villoutreys, an officer who had been offended by Napoleon, and by his three aides-de-camp, Bourmont, escorted like Dumouriez by a body of cavalry, left his camp at daybreak, as if to reconnoitre the enemy. When he had reached a certain distance from his troops, he dismissed his escort, delivered to the sub-officer who commanded it letters for General Gérard, and galloping with his officers towards the advance guard of the Prussian army, he disappeared to the eyes of his astonished escort behind the screen of Prussian cavalry. In a few hours Bourmont joined General Blucher against whom he was manœuvring in the morning.

It is not known whether he communicated to him the Emperor's order of march, with which he was acquainted as commandant of a French division, but his presence alone sufficiently acquainted Blucher with the movement of Gérard upon Charleroi. It put the Prussians on their guard against any surprise by the fourth *corps d'armée;* it made them understand by this partial movement the general movement with which it was to correspond; and it made the enemy acquainted a few hours sooner with the Emperor's intentions.

Blucher received Bourmont. The deserter hastened to present himself at Ghent, where he was received by the royalists of the court of Louis XVIII. with coldness and suspicion; some conceiving that he arrived too soon for his honour, and others, too late for his fidelity. He languished there in a state of isolation, the first penalty of acts which do not explain themselves. He subsequently regained the favour of the Bourbons, the direction of the army, victory, even, in the African expedition, pardon, glory, greatness, but esteem never. His name remains suspended in the eye of history between a weakness and a defection.

V.

Gérard, dismayed on learning the desertion of Bourmont, hastened to harangue his disquieted troops, and sent to acquaint

the Emperor with an event which might disconcert his plans by revealing them. The Emperor, on receiving the intelligence, ordered Gérard to suspend his direct movement upon Charleroi, and to countermarch, in order to deceive Blucher. This first night was troubled in the camp of the Emperor by that suspicion, which is invariably the source of panic in the imagination of soldiers.

The action of the following day, the 15th, effaced, however, these presentiments of evil from the minds of the troops, whose columns crossed the Sambre victoriously under the fire of the Prussian outposts, who were driven back, and pushed on beyond Charleroi. This was carried from the hills of the Sambre, that serve as so many steps to the eminence of Fleurus. At eleven o'clock the Emperor entered Charleroi with the guard. Reille and D'Erlon, at the head of two other *corps d'armée*, had preceded him.

Marshal Ney, who arrived from Paris at Charleroi at the same moment as the Emperor, received the command in chief of these two *corps d'armée*, comprising about 40,000 men, with orders to scale the heights of Fleurus, to drive back Ziethen, vigorously to hold them against this section of the Prussian army, and to seize immediately on the position called Quatre-Bras; to observe Wellington there, whilst the Emperor engaged, with the mass of the grand army, the army of Blucher.

"Do you know this position well?" said the Emperor to his general. "Yes, Sire," replied the marshal, "it was there that I made my first campaign twenty years ago. Quatre-Bras is the key of everything on this vast field of manœuvre." "Well," said the Emperor, "concentrate there your 40,000 men of Reille and D'Erlon; fortify your army there by defensive field works; hasten them, so that by midnight this position occupied and impregnable shall answer to me for the English." "Depend upon me," replied Ney. "In two hours I shall be at Quatre-Bras, with my 40,000 men, if the English should not get there before me." The marshal recovering all his ardour in the moment of action quitted the Emperor to execute his orders.

VI.

Ney had scarcely departed when the Emperor himself, uneasy at the immobility of his advance guard on the heights of Fleurus, left Charleroi on horseback, followed by a party of the Imperial Guard, to quicken the too tardy retreat of Ziethen, which kept back his movement on Blucher. On arriving at the heights, he ordered General Lecourt to take the squadrons on duty of his escort, and sweep Ziethen from his position. Lecourt obeyed, pushed forward his squadrons, and dispersed the 10,000 Prussians, but fell himself in the moment of victory.

The Emperor lamented his loss, and returned slowly to Charleroi, to press forward his last columns retarded by the precipitous banks of the Sambre The day was drawing to a close. Gérard, delayed by the counter-orders occasioned by the defection of Bourmont, had scarcely time to cross the Sambre and take up his appointed position. Napoleon, before engaging the grand army more in advance on the hills and eminences of Fleurus, waited peaceably until Ney should send him intelligence of the occupation of Quatre-Bras.

VII.

That general, although he had not yet arrived at Quatre-Bras, which was contested with his advance guard by a single Belgian battalion of Prince Bernard of Saxe-Weimar, thought himself so certain of being there next day, that he wrote to the Emperor that he had already arrived there. Stopped for a moment by surprise at the noise of the Emperor's cannon heard in the direction of Fleurus, Ney halted his columns to keep them within reach of the Emperor, in case of necessity. When the firing had ceased he resumed his movement; but night had fallen, and the troops were fatigued with two days march. Thinking himself equally certain of occupying Quatre-Bras without resistance, the following day as well as that night, Ney had forestalled the event by informing the Emperor that

he was actually in possession. It will be seen hereafter what fatal consequences this involuntary inexactitude of Ney, and these delays in the literal execution of his orders, produced on the operations of the following days.

The Emperor occupied the night at Charleroi in effecting an innovation in the relations of his staff with the different *corps d'armée*, which would seem to produce more unity in his movements, but which somewhat lessened the rapid transmission of orders on the field of battle. He divided the whole of the grand army into three masses, a right and left wing, and a centre, as an army in action; the left wing comprising 40,000 men under Marshal Ney, having under him Reille and D'Erlon for the infantry, and Kellermann and Lefèvre Desnouettes for the cavalry. The right wing under Marshal Grouchy, seconded by Vandamme and Gérard for the infantry, and Excelmans, Pajol, and Milhaud for the cavalry; finally, the centre, commanded by the Emperor himself, with Lobau commanding the infantry, and about 20,000 men of his Imperial Guard. Each of these armies reckoned nearly 40,000 combatants.

This measure, which appeared natural and simple at the opening of a campaign in which every day might produce an action, relaxed the direct ties which had hitherto drawn closer the connection between the tent of the Emperor and the secondary divisions of his army. It discontented the generals of these divisions, by making them subordinate to marshals with whom they considered themselves equal, and by depriving them of some of their responsibility and their glory.

On the 16th, not before ten o'clock in the morning, he advanced from Charleroi, after having sent orders to Marshal Grouchy, commanding his right wing, to march on the position of Sombref, and to establish himself there with Vandamme and Gerard, his seconds in command. Being informed at the same time of the delay which Ney had experienced the evening before in the occupation of Quatre-Bras, he wrote to him to reiterate the order to seize upon this position as speedily as possible, and to push forward from thence advance guards on the road to Brussels, to observe the movements of

Wellington; finally, to cover the space between Quatre-Bras and Sombref, the point upon which he had directed Grouchy, and where he was going to concentrate his own troops towards the close of the day.

Not content, however, with these orders, communicated by his Major-General Soult, the Emperor dictated to M. de Flahaut, one of his bravest and most intimate aides-de-camp, instructions more detailed and more confidential for Marshal Ney. These instructions revealed to him the Emperor's intention of pushing him forward with his 40,000 men upon Brussels, as soon as he himself should have beaten or driven back the Prussians as far as Gembloux.

"Brussels," he said to him, "shall be the pivot of the campaign; this capital once occupied, will disconcert Wellington and the Prussians at the same time, and the English army will float about, cut off from Mons and from Ostend. Prepare yourself on the first word you hear from me to push forward upon it your eight divisions, in conformity with the part I shall have taken to-morrow, perhaps this evening, perhaps in three hours hence." This part depended, as he conceived, on the degree of firmness he should find in the battalions of Blucher

M. de Flahaut departed He was scarcely gone when Marshal Soult wrote again to Ney by another officer, to inform him that Blucher was at Namur, that his dispositions made him apprehensive that he would direct his masses upon Quatre Bras, and also to give to the marshal the division of Kellermann as a reinforcement, in the event of his having to resist these masses. The groping of an army in the dark is evident in these orders; but neither the fears of Soult as to the presence of the Prussians at Quatre-Bras, nor the hopes of the Emperor, borne to Ney by Flahaut, were well founded. Blucher, by his rapidity and his resolution, had deceived them all. Leaving Namur the preceding evening, he had forestalled the Emperor, and concentrated 80,000 men upon Sombref, the point of junction, as he foresaw, of Grouchy and Napoleon.

At two o'clock, the Emperor on entering Fleurus, where he was expected by his advanced posts, was amazed to find before

him at Sombref the whole Prussian army, which he did not expect till two days later. He dismounted, passed beyond his posts and vedettes, and ascended to the summit of a windmill, which commanded the naked plain of Fleurus, whence he contemplated alone the innumerable bayonets with which this plain was covered, at a short distance from him.

All his plans of the day, and of the evening before, were baffled by this concentration, and by this unexpected presence of Blucher, who intercepted the route to Sombref, where he had hoped to precede him. On the other hand the separate battle with the Prussians which he was in search of, thus offered itself to his wish. He accepted at the same time the disappointment of fortune, and the favour she offered him in exchange. He instantly altered his plan, and modified all his orders. Vandamme and Gérard were recalled from the direction of Sombref, and countermarched upon Fleurus. Ney received orders to attack everything that was around him at Quatre-Bras, and to fall back immediately after on the Emperor, to crush with the weight of his 40,000 men the army of Blucher. "You will thus take him in the rear," wrote the Emperor. "His army is lost if you act vigorously. The fate of France is in your hands; therefore advance on Brie."

Brie was a village to the left of Fleurus. A volunteer officer, brave and adventurous, the Marquis de Forbin Janson, who had maintained the war singly in Burgundy in 1814, with a free corps levied at his own expense, was charged by the Emperor himself with this note. "In three hours," he said, while recommending celerity to M. de Forbin, "the fate of the war may be decided; all depends on the promptness and energy of Marshal Ney."

Comprising the cavalry of Kellermann which Soult had sent to Ney, this officer had now under his orders nearly 50,000 combatants.

VIII.

Meanwhile the day was passing, and yet the Emperor, desirous of giving Ney time to receive and to execute his

orders, did not give his impatient army the signal of battle. One hundred thousand Prussians of Blucher's army were now before him, the centre in advance of Brie, and the two wings in the village of St. Amand and at Ligny, with a vast extent of almost naked table-land between the two fronts. The French, massed in front and in advance of Fleurus, did not number more than 60,000 combatants, but they comprised the Imperial Guard, and the flower of the army, under the eyes of the Emperor himself. Confidence multiplied tenfold their strength and their ardour. An army in such a position is not to be reckoned by numbers but by hearts; it is, in fact, what it believes itself to be, and the French army felt itself invincible It devoured with its eyes the space between Fleurus and St. Amand. The Emperor calculating the time necessary to enable Ney to approach him by the sound of his cannon, at length issued orders to Vandamme and to Gérard to carry St. Amand.

This long village, built on a gentle slope inclining towards Fleurus, covered with avenues, hedges, orchards, ponds, enclosures, and ravines containing little water courses, concealed the Prussians from the French army, and offered as many natural fortifications as there were hamlets, farms, and houses detached from each other.

Vandamme, without being retarded for an instant by the Prussian artillery, whose smoking batteries from under those masses of foliage were ploughing the plain, advanced at the head of his division of infantry, and arrived at the first clumps of trees which concealed the enemy from him. Then, dashing forward amidst cries of "Vive l'Empereur!" to the assault of those successive stages crowned with batteries and bayonets, received the Prussian fire into his decimated ranks, without relaxing his speed, disappeared from the eyes of the French army under this cloud of trees and smoke, carried one after another all the village redoubts, attacked the enemy even in the houses now transformed into so many battle fields, cleared the summit of the eminence, driving the Prussians back with the bayonet, and pushing them into the ravine which ran along the other side of St. Amand. He was already ascending, beyond

the village, the plateau of Brie, when Blucher seeing from a distance his right wing thus penetrated, pushed forward some fresh battalions upon Vandamme; led them on, animated them with his own courage, and driving back Vandamme's infantry into the ravine, forced it to re-ascend the slope of St. Amand, and to content itself with occupying against the Prussian troops this natural fortress, from which it had just driven them down

IX.

Whilst Vandamme was thus beginning the battle on the left, the Emperor contemplating from the garret window of the windmill the progress of his left wing, sent for General Gérard, who had scarcely come into line with the 12,000 men he commanded. Napoleon reproached him in a tone of gentle raillery with the mistaken confidence which, in spite of himself and of Davoust, he had reposed in Bourmont, for whose fidelity Gérard and Ney had so rashly answered. Then taking him by the hand, and pointing out to him the church tower of Ligny, on the summit of the plain to the right: "General of my fourth corps," he said to him with a smile, "you see that steeple beyond the ravine, the banks of which are covered with Blucher's left wing! That is your direction: go and carry those positions from the enemy." Gérard mounted his horse at the foot of the windmill, galloped towards his division, and traversing, to the music of his military bands, the plain which separated the two armies, rushed forward like Vandamme to the assault of Ligny.

A deep ravine in advance of the houses, bristling with batteries and battalions, defended the entrance of Ligny, which was considered impregnable. Gérard cleared it, though he filled it with his own dead and those of the enemy. His shells and those of the Prussians set fire to the farms and nearest houses which lined the broad avenue of the village, and the battle raged amidst the flames which from street to street separated the combatants. The village was taken and retaken four times in successive charges, sometimes by the French, sometimes by the Prussians Gérard, who felt that the

impatient eye of the Emperor was upon him, led his battalions in person into the midst of the fire. Surrounded in one of these charges by a squadron of Prussian lancers, his horse getting his feet entangled in the stubble of a corn field, fell and rolled into a ditch. His staff and his escort hastened to raise their general, fighting at the same time to cover him from the lances of the enemy. His aide-de-camp, Lafontaine, killed two desperate assailants amongst this group of officers, and his sabre snapping in his hand he still fought with the broken remnant that remained. General St. Remy fell with two lance wounds by the side of Gérard. The aide-de-camp Duperron sacrificed himself to save his general; he gave him his horse, and exerted himself to release him from the weight of his own which was crushing him at the bottom of the ditch.

Vain efforts! Gérard must have been taken or killed in the midst of this handful of officers struggling with desperation in his defence, had it not been for the son of Marshal Grouchy, who commanded a regiment of chasseurs under Gérard, and who, on perceiving this conflict, darted upon the Prussians, dispersed them, and saved his general. Ligny, in flames, was at length carried by the French, the fury of the com batants having transformed it into one vast heap of ashes and dead bodies. Blucher himself, on retiring from it, acknowledged that in all his long wars he had never seen victory contested and won with such desperate courage. 400 pieces of cannon answering each other from line to line across the plain covered with bullets, with earth, with fragments of arms, and ruins of walls, the ravine above the heads of the combatants.

It was now five o'clock; and Vandamme's reserves being engaged on the side of Ligny, this was the moment to reinforce them and decide the battle. The Emperor, who had in hand 20,000 men of his guard until then immovable, sent them forward at length to press upon the enemy's centre. He suddenly stopped them half way by a counter-order, the meaning of which the soldiers could not comprehend. He himself seemed to hesitate in giving it.

At the moment he was thus about to engage his last troops, he was informed by aides-de-camp of Vandamme that this

general had seen across the smoke from the summit of the church tower of St. Amand, a *corps d'armée* of about 30,000 men advancing on his left in the direction of Brie. Vandamme at first thought that this army was a wing of Ney's, hastening to take the enemy in flank and rear, according to the well-known plan of the Emperor; but he soon after saw this inexplicable army change the route by which it was approaching him, halt, as if undecided, and feeling its way with no apparent object, then retrace its steps, and finally disappear behind an eminence at the extremity of the plain. He communicated these observa tions to the Emperor. The Emperor himself was confounded and astonished at the intelligence. He delayed two whole hours for destiny to explain itself. Should it prove a wing of Ney's army, its arrival must be awaited,—if an English column escaped from the observation of that marshal, he must keep in reserve against it his centre and his guard.

But he waited in vain; nothing re-appeared. He had now only a few moments of daylight left. He must either acknowledge himself vanquished, or complete his victory; for the next day would double the forces of the Prussians, whose cannon had doubtless given notice to Wellington of the action. He mounted his horse again, and pushed his 20,000 fresh combatants across the plain of Fleurus. On approaching the Prussian line he divided them into three columns: one in the centre, where he himself was; the other two directed obliquely, one towards Vandamme with the cuirassiers, the pseor grenadiers, and the dragoons of his guard, to sweep from the plateau of Brie the right wing of Blucher, and the other towards Gérard at Ligny

X

These troops, irritated at the long state of inaction in which they had been kept, dashed forward on these two heights, to support, rescue, and avenge their comrades. General Girard, a young officer to whom the Emperor was partial, animated his four columns with his own courage, clambered up the banks of the som ravine behind St. Amand, down which Vandamme had des-

cended in the morning, charged the Prussian masses which covered Brie, broke into, dispersed, and overwhelmed them, and fell in the moment of victory, struck with two balls in the chest His columns passed over his body by the impulse he had given them.

'Blucher himself, always more of a soldier than a general, saw his right wing shattered and decimated; he hastily collected some squadrons of his cavalry of reserve, and dashed at the cuirassiers and dragoons of the guard. His horse struck by a ball in the flank fell and rolled over on his rider in a field of corn. The French squadrons returning at full speed upon the Prussians, galloped over him, amidst the clouds of smoke, as he lay amongst the bodies of men and horses which strewed the ground. Twice they passed and repassed the enemy's general, still entangled under his horse, without knowing him.' One final charge of the Prussian dragoons delivered Blucher at last; he sprang upon the horse of one of his men, and rejoined his reserve, twice a prisoner, and twice delivered by his good fortune.

Ligny was carried upon his other flank; Brie outflanked him on the right; and the French army, victorious everywhere in its wings, was now converging upon his centre. Blucher had lost the whole line of his fortified positions, and 20,000 dead bodies of his army covered the acclivities and plain of Fleurus. Night was falling. He was cut off from Wellington at Quatre-Bras, by Ney's army of 40,000 men He therefore ordered a general retreat, and disappeared amidst the darkness. He halted two leagues from Ligny, at the village of Gembloux, where he met the army of Bulow, his colleague, just arrived from Liege, and which covered him during the night.

The Emperor victorious, but without any other fruit of his victory than the field of battle and the glory of a first success, slept at Ligny in the midst of his troops. Ney's absence, the dread of venturing the grand army against Blucher, and the mysterious *corps d'armée* which Vandamme had indicated to him in the evening, prevented him from pursuing, and from making a single prisoner. But the exaggerated though legitimate fame of the defeat of the

Prussian army secured for him in France, and in Europe, spoils more valuable than 10,000 prisoners. He had regained his name. This battle was called the Battle of Ligny.

XI

Napoleon did not learn till the following day what had caused the inactivity of Ney, whose co-operation should have completed and made serviceable his victory, and also the mystery of the *corps d'armée* partially seen at a distance, and whose apparition had by turns exalted and depressed his resolutions during the action. At any other time he would, perhaps, have accused and punished the parties who had committed these errors, but under his present policy towards his generals he contented himself with deploring them, and held his tongue.

Marshal Ney had arrived, as we have seen, unexpectedly at Avesnes, at the same time as the Emperor, without any staff, confidential officers, aides-de-camp, equipage, or horses; and had received the unexpected command of numerous corps, whose positions he scarcely knew, in a country which had been effaced from his memory for twenty years. He was equally unacquainted with the general officers who commanded these different corps. Some days were necessary to enable him to study the ground, the troops, and the characters he had to deal with. This ignorance of men and things somewhat lessened the rapidity and confidence of his *coup d'œil;* in short, he had not as yet his army in hand. Perhaps also the conviction of his false position with the Emperor and his colleagues, since his double fault at Fontainebleau and at Lons-le-Saulnier, weighed upon his spirit. He had to apprehend more than any other the slightest reverse; for calumny would have painted it to the Emperor and to the army as an indication of treason. His course, therefore, was to be scrupulously prudent, while his character was that of boldness and temerity. A man, however great he may be, is only great by his nature; when that nature is neutralised by circumstances, he is no longer himself. This was the case with Marshal Ney since his misfortune.

His conduct before and during the battle of Ligny evinced the state of his mind. If he had exercised at Quatre-Bras one half the foresight and firmness he had displayed in the retreat of the Beresina, there would probably have been no Waterloo Ligny would have begun and finished one of the most decisive campaigns of the Emperor.

We have seen that Ney, on approaching Quatre-Bras on the 14th, had written to the Emperor that he was actually there before he had arrived; he had bivouaced two leagues from Gosselies. During this night, so imprudently lost, 10,000 Dutch and Belgians of the Prince of Orange's *corps d'armée* advanced under cover of the forest of Nivelles, otherwise called the Bois-de-Bossu, which also defended their position at Quatre-Bras, and thus forestalled the French. The following day at daybreak, the marshal ordered an attack upon the approaches of this position, the meeting of four great roads, by which whole armies and their convoys might be distributed in different directions. The brigade commanded by General Foy, already illustrious in war, and ere long to be still more illustrious in the tribune, mounted those heights with resolution; but in proportion as Ney's columns increased, and became more desperate in the attack, the unaccountable resistance of an enemy which the evening before numbered only 1,500 men, and 8,000 in the morning, became more formidable Ney himself engaged in succession one half of his army, that is to say, about 25,000 combatants. But still repulsed with fresh energy, these 25,000 men were constantly driven back upon him. The marshal at length discovered, when too late, that he had lost eighteen decisive hours of a campaign, wherein hours created armies for his surprised but inexhaustible enemy It was now evident to him that he was no longer struggling with an outpost, but with an entire army, pouring upon Quatre-Bras through the sombre avenues of the forest of Nivelles.

XII

The Duke of Wellington had hitherto remained idle and unconcerned at Brussels, and his negligence was more inexcusable

than that of Marshal Blucher, whose columns had not yet come up into line when the Emperor had crossed the Sambre, as we have seen at Ligny, where Bulow and his *corps d'armée* had only arrived after the battle. Ill-informed of the musters and the movements of the Emperor even to the last moment, and still more ignorant of his genius, which excelled in rapidity and surprise, the Duke of Wellington still reckoned upon weeks of preparation and inaction. He thought that the Emperor would imitate his own tactics, by falling back, as in 1814, from position to position, into the interior of France; that he would take his fortified places for the basis and for redoubts of his army of operation; that he would dispute the passage of rivers, and that at length concentrated in the plains adjacent to Paris, where he would be rejoined by all his reinforcements from the east, the west, and the centre, he would there, and only there, come to one of those final engagements, like those of Wagram, of Dresden, or of Jena, which decide the fate of a throne under the eyes of a capital.

He therefore wrote conjectural despatches to the Emperor Alexander, in which he discussed, according to this hypothesis, the plan of the combined invasion of France by the allies Meanwhile he allowed his troops, which were dispersed in Belgium, in order to spare a friendly country, to repose peacefully in their cantonments. He himself with his staff, his generals, and his select regiments, were enjoying, as a prelude to the war, the fetes and pleasures of Brussels, which he greatly relished, and of the enervating effects of which upon his officers he was not at all apprehensive.

He was, in fact, a warrior altogether modern, from character, from principle, and from the voluptuous habits contracted in India, in Portugal, and in Spain Like Frederick II., or Turenne, he did not tighten and restrict before the hour of action the discipline and spirit of his companions in arms He allowed his generals, his young officers, and his soldiers to enjoy the pleasures, the amusements, and the voluptuousness which he permitted to himself. Stringent only as to punctuality and bravery in action, he allowed the rigours of his camp to relax, both before and after, without fear of his troops becoming effe-

minate He was of opinion that the soldier, bound to expose his life at every hazard, might forestal death, which was always at hand, by enjoying, when the hour was his own, those fleeting pleasures of the heart or the senses snatched from the fatigues and dangers of the camp. The rigid English reproached him with allowing the morals of his young staff-officers to be corrupted by too much indulgence, and with treating men as the Hindoos treat elephants, which they intoxicate to make them more warlike.

XIII

On the night of the 14th, while Napoleon was crossing the Sambre, driving in the Prussian outposts, advancing with 108,000 men upon Ligny and Quatre-Bras, and already pointing out to Ney the road to Brussels, a ball was given in that city, by the Duchess of Richmond, who had gathered in her saloons, resounding with music and animated by the dance, the princes, the diplomatists, the generals, and the officers of the English army. The Duke of Wellington was chatting in the recess of a window, amidst the noise and gaiety of the scene, with the Duke of Brunswick, one of his generals, when an aide-de-camp approached, and in a low voice communicated to him the contents of despatches which had just arrived at head quarters. The Duke of Brunswick, who belonged to a martial family, to which every campaign since 1772 seemed to prophesy the death of one of its members on the field of battle, arose with such a start at this unexpected news of the invasion of Belgium by Napoleon, that he quite forgot a young child that was slumbering on his knee, and which he allowed to roll upon the carpet. Wellington turned pale, but buried in his own soul the feelings excited by the surprise and his own imprudence.

In an instant the news circulated through the ball-room: the music ceased, the dancers dispersed, and ladies felt and trembled for those that were dear to them; the princes and diplomatists fell into groups to exchange hastily their first impressions; the officers retired: and Wellington disappeared to

send instantly to all the divisions the necessary instructions and orders to march. By his presence of mind, his promptitude, and decision, he redeemed the fault he had committed in forgetting Napoleon, in relaxing the management of his army, and not occupying the positions which covered Brussels. One hour after the receipt of the despatch, officers were flying on all the roads of Belgium to call his troops together. The nearest immediately got under arms; and cavalry, artillery, field trains, and convoys were careering at full speed through the streets of Brussels, to gain the forest of Nivelles, and reach Quatre-Bras, if the weak brigade of the Duke of Saxe-Weimar still kept possession of it, or if not to reconquer it.

These orders being given and executed, Wellington himself left Brussels the last, and galloped forward, followed by his numerous staff of all nations, to the advanced posts, to reconnoitre the danger. Quatre-Bras was not taken, and he breathed freely. The Prince of Orange, as we have seen, had got there before him, and had placed 8,000 Dutch and Belgians in position, to support the Duke of Saxe-Weimar, and his weak battalions.

From the summit of the plateau, which slopes from the skirts of the forest towards Quatre-Bras, Wellington, who had dismounted, distinguished with his telescope the French masses which seemed to hesitate and to increase in number at the foot of the position. "I have fought against the French armies in Spain, for a long time," he said to his officers, "and I know the aspect of their columns: this is not a wing pushed forward to reconnoitre a position, or to make a division; 'tis an army commanded by a marshal in person. His numerous staff announces the presence of an important chief, or perhaps of the Emperor himself If he attacks we are lost; our force is insufficient against such masses. But no matter, we must stand or fall here to the last man! This is the knot of the war and the key of the position!" He confirmed his resolution with a motion of the hand, which indicated upon the soil the place of the tomb or the pedestal of victory. The Prince of Orange, his generals, and his officers, were all imbued with his own courage. The power of his soul fixed them, living

or dead, upon the borders of the forest that rose above the plain We shall soon see how many amongst them fell there rather than belie the resolution of their general.

XIV

Mounting his horse again after this reconnaissance, Wellington despatched general upon general, and courier upon courier to accelerate the march of the troops he had summoned during the night. "They must not," he repeated to all, "wait for one another, but march by regiments, by divisions, by troops even; battalion by battalion, company by company; the first ready, the nearest, and the bravest. They must not walk but run as to a fire!"

Wellington, while waiting the return of his officers, and the result of his orders, sat down pensively on the borders of the slope which descends from the forest to the chaussée of Namur, counting the minutes, and trembling lest the French masses spread out before his eyes should make that movement in advance, which would be their victory and his defeat Ney continued motionless. Two long hours thus slipped away. The English general Picton's division, announced to Wellington by the arrival at full gallop of an advance-picket of officers, emerged at length from the forest at three o'clock. The Duke of Brunswick, at the head of his auxiliary corps, followed him, and after him came the Duke of Nassau. At four o'clock 50,000 chosen men, infantry, cavalry, and artillery, had already covered the position of Quatre-Bras, which the evening before was only defended by a single battalion, and that morning by 8,000 men only, whom Ney could have made himself master of. Had he done so, he would two days later have saved France an army and an empire.

XV

The marshal, who had delayed his attack until now, seemed to comprehend the importance of this point from the number of troops which the allies put forth to preserve it. He commenced the attack with his 25,000 men, and scaled the

first slopes of the forest, now cleared and cultivated, but which then extended beyond Quatre-Bras into the plain. Nothing could withstand the impetuosity of himself and his army. In a few moments the troops of the Duke of Nassau were driven back upon the heights: the French lancers and light dragoons charged and scattered the regiments of the Duke of Brunswick. The prince himself fell in one of these charges, struck with that soldier's death, of which he had expressed a presentiment while chatting the evening before with the Duke of Wellington.

Kellermann, breaking, by the weight and impetus of his heavily armed horse, through a Scotch regiment formed in a square, as if to make a fortress to the main body at Quatre-Bras, killed its colonel and captured its colours. Ney, animated by the fire, galloping amidst showers of artillery and musket-balls, urged his forces up to Quatre-Bras, which he thought himself already in possession of. Two fresh English divisions, advancing rapidly at the firing and noise of the attack, at a signal from Wellington, covered the heights anew, and 60,000 combatants drove back the French regiments, and forced them into their original position. Trembling with rage, Ney looked incessantly towards Frasnes, hoping for the approach of the 20,000 men of D'Erlon, to whom he sent order upon order to hasten to join him. The horizon continued vacant, and the day was wearing apace.

Labédoyère, whom he had sent last of all to bear to D'Erlon orders to march upon Quatre-Bras, arrived on his mission about five o'clock, but D'Erlon was no longer at Frasnes, having quitted the direction of Quatre-Bras at midday, and resumed the route to Ligny. The marshal stood aghast and shook with rage, for he could do nothing more unaided. His infantry and cavalry, having both been engaged and decimated for three hours past, were incapable of renewing an assault against an army which was increasing every instant. He had no other regiments unbroken but two of cuirassiers under Kellermann; and these were scarcely enough to cover the army, should the English advance their cavalry into the plain. The batteries hurriedly thrown up by Wellington at the other side of the forest were incessantly vomiting forth grape and round-shot upon

his regiments: "You see those balls," said he to Labédoyère; "would to heaven they had all passed through my body!" The despair of the unfortunate marshal inspired him to a final effort, hopeless as his own heart. He galloped up to Kellermann, and cried to him in a supplicating voice: "One more effort, my dear general! Dash forward with your two regiments at the heart of the English army, and break it at any cost. I will support you with Piré, who is re-forming his regiments. The country requires it of you!"

"Charge!" cried Kellermann without hesitation to his cuirassiers, and like a thunderbolt he dashed in upon the centre of the English army, which he broke with irresistible fury, passing through both lines, destroying the batteries, and penetrating as far as the fortified farm of Quatre-Bras The walls and hedges of this post were lined with a reserve of infantry, who poured in a close and heavy fire upon the cuirassiers. Kellermann's horse was struck, and rolled over with his rider, covered with blood He was immediately surrounded by the English, but delivered by a charge of cuirassiers. A French column of infantry, entering by the breach which Kellermann's cavalry had made in the English lines, penetrated as far as Quatre-Bras, when Wellington, from above, despatched Count d'Alten's division and the English guards to engage them. These fresh and irresistible forces, drove back the French infantry. Ney succumbed to the impossible. Once more, however, he sent General Delcombe in search of D'Erlon, resolved to make another effort on the arrival of that corps, which he supposed had missed its way

XVI

This, however, was not the case We have seen that on the morning of the day when the Emperor was preparing to attack Blucher, he had sent Labédoyère to Marshal Ney with an order, written in pencil, to fall back upon Ligny, where it was intended that the grand army should give battle, in order to discomfit Blucher on the left, and to cut off his junction with

the English. Napoleon at that time believed, on the faith of Ney's letter, that he was master of Quatre-Bras.

Labédoyère, on passing through Frasnes, an intermediate village between Ligny and Ney, had met D'Erlon, and his 20,000 men, striking their camp to follow Ney to Quatre-Bras. He had shown the Emperor's written order which he was carrying to Ney, to D'Erlon, who on reading it, and anticipating one of a similar purport from Ney, hastened to precede the marshal by marching towards Ligny. He missed the road at the beginning of this movement, and arrived at Fleurus, a point too much in rear of the Emperor's field of battle: there he rectified his error, and at length arrived within reach of the Prussians on the side of Brie.

It was there they had been seen by Vandamme, who gave information to the Emperor that a fresh army was in sight, whose colours he could not distinguish. D'Erlon was waiting there the arrival of Ney, or an order from the Emperor, inactive and useless to both armies; when fresh orders from Ney, delivered by Delcombe, summoned him to return as speedily as possible to Quatre-Bras. He did so accordingly, without reflecting that by a lucky disobedience he might save the Emperor and ruin Blucher. He fell back in the dark upon Ney, and at nine o'clock in the evening arrived in the outskirts of Quatre-Bras. Thus, through the fault of Ney, and the ignorance of the Emperor, who must have thought that his order of the 13th was accomplished and the fatal obedience of D'Erlon, 20,000 men, the élite of the army, and fifty pieces of cannon, had missed two battles, wandering about a day and a night, attracted by the noise of cannon, from one camp to another, thus causing a defeat at Quatre-Bras, and an unaccomplished victory at Ligny. A misfortune occasioned by a fault, and aggravated by other misfortunes. Ney, by his tardiness to occupy Quatre-Bras the evening before; D'Erlon by hesitating between contrary orders, and Labédoyère by his unauthorised communication to D'Erlon of the Emperor's order which he was taking to Ney, share amongst them the responsibility of the day's disasters.

XVII

Notwithstanding his vigorous resistance to the assaults of Ney, Wellington was not deceived as to the results of the double battle of Ligny. It may be seen in his correspondence with the Duke de Berry, from the field of battle, that he did not exaggerate the success of the Emperor against the Prussians, but that neither did he dissemble his own dangers on the following day "We had yesterday," he wrote to the prince, whom he kept informed of the slightest events, that he might acquaint his uncle Louis XVIII. with them, in time to provide for his own safety at Ghent; "we had yesterday a double and most sanguinary battle: on my part, near the farm of Quatre Bras, on that of the Prussians near Sombref. I had but few troops with me, and no cavalry; nevertheless, I resisted and repulsed the enemy. The Prussians suffered greatly, and retired during the night; I have therefore had to fall back myself to keep in line with them. I have been but feebly pursued, the Prussians not at all. Bulow and their fourth army of 30,000 men have rejoined them. I have now almost all my forces around me

"Perhaps the enemy may disturb my position by Hal, although the weather is dreadful and the roads impracticable, and although I have stationed Prince Frederick of the Netherlands, with a strong force, between Hal and Enghien. Should this happen, advise the King to take refuge in Antwerp. Everything must be looked to, that the blood of the army may be spared. Let the King retire to Antwerp, not upon mere rumours, but as soon as he has certain intelligence that the Emperor has entered Brussels before me."

XVIII

Whilst Blucher was re-organising his battalions, and covering himself with the army of Bulow, at Sombref, and Wellington was falling back upon Waterloo, and taking up his

position in front of that village, upon a field of battle, chosen and studied, in concert with the remnant of the Prussian army, the Emperor, though victorious, was afflicting himself with the thought of an imperfect victory, the fortunate but terrible prelude of a more decisive battle. His soldiers were astonished at not having seen the engagement terminate by one of those sallies of reserve or of wings, with which, in his great battles, he was accustomed to surround or disperse the enemy's army. There only remained to them a field of battle, strewn with 20,000 Prussians, and 12,000 French, dead or dying, in the furrows of Ligny and St. Amand; before them, night and the vacant plain whence Blucher had disappeared only to re-appear upon their left The 40,000 men of Ney's army had vanished altogether. Everything was suspicion, snare, or problem in their imaginations. They accused their bravest chiefs of treason: Soult, the Emperor's major-general, appeared to them an evil genius, watching the chances of fortune in his own tent, or indolently giving tardy orders, the non-execution of which made their courage fruitless and their very blood unavailing. Every instant fresh rumours flew from bivouac to bivouac, announcing some imaginary defection in the ranks. The shock given the evening before by the desertion of Bourmont, to the minds of the soldiers, was communicated from troop to troop. One moment it was Soult who was delivering up the Emperor, the next Vandamme who was going over to the enemy, now again it was General Maurin who was haranguing his dragoons that he might conduct them to the King. Nothing was true, all seemed probable. The Emperor himself, often questioned by the soldiers, could scarcely succeed in re assuring them. Their courage continued the same, despair even redoubled it; but confidence, the cement of armies, was lost. The night passed in these conversations interrupted by regret for the losses of the day, and by gloomy anticipations of the morrow This was the night of the 17th of June.*

* *Sic in orig.* This is, however, an error. It was that of the 16th.—*Translator*

XIX.

The Emperor who had returned to Fleurus did not sleep upon his victory. He was not deceived himself on the nature of his triumph, but took care to magnify it by his bulletins in the eyes of France, and to forward to Paris exaggerated accounts of the annihilation of the Prussian army. He felt the importance of striking the imagination of his enemies in the interior, and of awing the assembly of representatives with one of those victories which had proved at all times his best negociation with the parties of the State. He had re covered his prestige. Paris, hitherto undecided, would succumb, now as ever, to good fortune. He alone no longer believed with the faith with which he wished to inspire his friends and enemies.

He complained bitterly of Ney, whom he inwardly accused of two errors; first with having dallied with the English in the morning while they were still weak, and not having attacked them with all his strength till after he had given them whole hours to get into force at Quatre Bras; secondly, with having recalled D'Erlon at the moment that general, with his 20,000 men, was in sight of Ligny, and was going to complete the victory.

He wavered during the whole of this night amidst the uncertainties of his double situation. Should he recall Ney to complete at Sombref the defeat of the Prussians? Or should he abandon the Prussians to their fate, and rejoin Ney himself at Quatre-Bras to give battle there to the English? He fixed upon this last resolution, and sent orders to Ney to attack Wellington again at daybreak. He apprised him that a reinforcement detached from his own army, and commanded by Count de Lobau, comprising two divisions of infantry, the cuirassiers of the guard, and the light cavalry, would join him by the road from Namur to Brussels, to support him in his attack. These orders, transmitted in consequence from Fleurus to the different corps, reached troops harassed after the recent action, horses jaded, and officers obliged to bear with the lassitude and the necessities of

their troops. They were therefore executed with difficulty and delay. Precious hours were lost. The roads broken up by the rains, the discouragement of some, and the negligence of others rendered slow and heavy the movements of these two armies, separated from each other by a long distance The columns were not in marching order till the middle of the day.

XX.

The Emperor himself, still waiting for news from Ney to decide his movements, did not leave Fleurus till late, in his campaign carriage, to visit the ghastly field of battle of Ligny. Arrived at St. Amand he mounted his horse and rode over the positions which had been carried the evening before and were still occupied by the troops who had conquered them. He was saluted by these troops with acclamations, which drowned the lamentations for the dead and the groans of the wounded. He and his army embraced, as it were, in the joy of a first triumph.

He dismounted and sat some time on the knapsack of one of his grenadiers, surrounded by the generals and colonels of his guard, chatting familiarly with them on the exploits of the past battle, and anticipations of the next. He himself seemed to devote this critical day to uncertainty. He awaited the return of the detachments he had sent to Ney for an account of that general's operations. These having arrived, and informing him that Ney, at eleven o'clock, had not yet commenced the attack, the Emperor understood that the marshal hesitated, as having too small a force to grapple with the united English army, and came to an immediate decision. This was to attack the nearest enemy, and trust to distance, to chance, or to fortune, to guard against the return of the Prussians. He dictated his orders to Soult, accordingly.

XXI

The grand army, divided, as we have seen, into three *Translator* [illegible]arleroi, was now confined to two. one under the

Emperor's own immediate orders, comprising the army of Ney and that which had fought at Ligny; the other under the command of Marshal Grouchy: the first numbering about 80,000 men, the second from 30,000 to 40,000, in all 115,000 warriors. The Emperor, obliged to divide this army into two separate bodies which would lose sight of each other for a long time, calculated that 80,000 men, directed by his genius, inspired with his spirit, and animated by his presence, would suffice to conquer Wellington's army, henceforth isolated from the Prussians, and composed of auxiliary and incoherent troops, many of which even, such as the Belgians, were unwillingly opposed to the French. He ordered Marshal Grouchy to follow the Prussians step by step in their retreat, to keep up with them, never to let them out of his sight, and to manœuvre between them and the grand army, so as to cover this army constantly against the sudden return of Blucher, and at the same time to retard as much as possible the junction of this general with the English army He was to direct his course upon Wavres.

The incessant rain, the inundated roads, the care of the wounded, and the murmurs of the soldiers, the same causes, in short, which had obliged Ney and the Emperor himself to lose the morning of the 17th, retarded the movement of Grouchy. With difficulty he led his cumbrous army towards Wavres, and only reached Gembloux, an intermediate village a little to the right, at the close of the day. The Prussians, abandoned by the Emperor at St. Amand on the one hand, and so feebly pursued by Grouchy on the other, had thus thirty hours to rally, to concentrate, to repair their losses by the army of Bulow, to concert their movements with Wellington, and to conceal their route from Grouchy and the Emperor.

The 17th June, therefore, the day after a first victory, was entirely lost to the conquerors, and profitable only to the conquered. The elements themselves seemed to conspire with the enemy to rob the French of the fruits of their victory The plains were inundated by the incessant rain of three days. The saturated soil slipped from under the feet of men and

horses. The depressed and hazy clouds concealed behind the slightest undulations of the plains the movements of the Prussians and the English. The sinister aspect of the heavens made a corresponding impression on the hearts of the soldiers.

It was two o'clock before the Emperor, quitting the group of generals and officers by whom he was surrounded, issued his final orders, called for his horse, and taking with him the guard and the bulk of the grand army towards Quatre-Bras, merely left at St. Amand and at Ligny General Girard* as a rear guard with the remains of his division, which had been decimated the day before in the assault on St. Amand. The Emperor directed his march upon the village of Marbois and on Quatre-Bras

XXII.

We must now see what was passing during this great loss of time in the camp of Ney and the English army. Further hesitation on the part of Ney had given Wellington time to fall back upon the heights of the forest of Soignies, which commands the plain and the village of Waterloo, thus drawing near to Blucher, so that they would be able to aid each other in case of attack, and covering at the same time, though less efficiently, the road to Brussels. But Wellington, to deceive Ney or to retard him, had left the Earl of Uxbridge with a strong rear guard at Quatre-Bras. Ney still believing the whole army of Wellington to be in this position, waited for a reinforcement to make the attack ordered from Fleurus, by the Emperor. He thus lost the opportunity of routing the flank of the English army by Hal, the event Wellington was most apprehensive of, and of opening the road to Brussels for the Emperor. Lord Uxbridge only evacuated Quatre-Bras at the sight of the first columns of Napoleon

On approaching Quatre-Bras in the evening, the Emperor was astonished that instead of coming to meet him Ney remained silent and motionless in the midst of his forces.

* This officer was, as we have previously seen, mortally wounded in the action. Gérard is probably meant here.—*Translator*

Without waiting for him any longer, therefore, he ordered Generals d'Erlon and Reille to proceed through Quatre-Bras, and advance rapidly on the road to Brussels' Ney at length appeared, disconcerted at his faults, hesitating in his excuses, and embarrassed in his manner before the Emperor, who addressed him with reproaches such as his generals were accustomed to hear from a mouth whose praises were so valuable, but which left to those so reprimanded the chance, and indeed encouraged them to the honour of repairing their errors. The marshal replied with deference that he had been afraid of rashly attacking with the left wing alone the entire English army, which he believed to be still at Quatre-Bras, and thus depriving the Emperor of one third of his army, of which he would probably have occasion to cope with Blucher.

These explanations appeared to satisfy Napoleon. This was not the moment to deprive himself by sour and angry rebukes of the name, the heart, and the arm of Ney. The troops advanced rapidly on the track of the English, towards the forest of Soignies. The general of light cavalry, Subervie, charged the English in the rear, at the head of the cavalry of the guard, and under the eye of Napoleon. This general, a republican in sentiment and habits, like Foy and some other generals faithful to their original cause, forgot the predilections of his youth upon the field of battle. in his love of country and passion for glory, the common patrimony of all governments. The Emperor, acquainted with his opinions, tolerated them on account of his services. He followed closely the footsteps of Subervie to the borders of the immense forest of Soignies, in which had disappeared the last columns of Wellington's retreating army. He halted there — it was Waterloo.

XXIII.

Some French tirailleurs, ascending by the Emperor's orders the acclivities which rise from the plain towards the first trees of the forest, a battery of fifty pieces of cannon thundered above their heads, and indicated to the Emperor that the enemy had halted there

"We should have had two hours more daylight," he said with vexation, "to lift that curtain, and drive the enemy upon the road to Brussels." It was the destiny of Ney to deprive him of these. He had now only light sufficient to encamp his troops, and to study the next day's field of battle. He reconnoitred it in person, sometimes on foot, and sometimes on horseback. He himself has narrated at St. Helena his impressions of that evening and that night.

The plain, which was unequal, like those of the Netherlands generally which approach the centre of Germany by gentle, arch like undulations—distant roots, as it were, of its forest of mountains—appeared uniform and level to the eye, from the watery clouds which hung low upon the horizon. It began to ascend insensibly from the little village of Waterloo, overshadowed by lofty trees, then shattered by the bullets and since cut down: it then rose to a steep ascent, crossed by the road to Nivelles, until it reached the extremities of the forest of Soignies. Clumps of trees advanced in some places, like sombre peninsulas, amidst fields covered with ripening crops of grain. Thatched cottages were grouped here and there in the woodland glades. The inhabitants with their flocks and herds had fled from their dwellings and pastures during the silence of the night before the battle, of which the chances of war were about to make them the theatre. In front of the French army stood Waterloo and Mont-Saint-Jean; on its right Ohain and St. Lambert; beyond this and out of sight was Wavres, the destination of Grouchy's army with its twofold object; to the left of the field were the farm and old fortified castle of Hougoumont, Braisne-la-Leud, La Haie Sainte, the farm of Caillou, that of La Belle Alliance, La Maison d'Ecosse, Ottignies, Moustiers; and a little in rear the elevated village of Planchenoit, commanding the broad and hollow valley which separated this side of the eminences occupied by the French army, from the opposite side of Waterloo and the uplands of the forest of Soignies where the British army was encamped.

Napoleon halted his troops on these ridges. The delays of the day, one half of which was lost; the approach of night, which only left an hour or two for the operations of the

general; the weariness of both men and horses, drenched with rain, and draggled with mud for two days past, amongst fields changed into marshes by incessant showers; the necessity for putting himself in more precise communication with the right wing of Grouchy, marching as chance directed behind the hills of Wavres; the want of repose and nourishment of the troops, harassed by marching and fighting; and, above all, the mysteries of the forest of Soignies, concealing behind that screen of trees either a simple rear-guard, or the entire English army—compelled the Emperor to restrain his impatience, and to seek from the closing day and from the night, the time, the thoughts, and the knowledge of events of which he stood in need, before he should risk his last army and his final fortune in a battle.

XXIV

He fixed his head-quarters at the village of Planchenoit, in the centre of his position, an observatory admirably disposed by nature, and chosen by the *coup d'œil* of a consummate general, to command all, to see all, and direct all on the field of battle, every part of which was overlooked by this village. With a single glance, the Emperor could inspect his own army; the plains and hillocks between Waterloo and Planchenoit, and, finally, all the eminences and the borders of the forest of Soignies, where the English army would have to manœuvre the following day.

His ideas respecting Wellington and Blucher were confused, and being in want of information, he had nothing but conjectures to build upon. He was inclined, however, to think that Blucher, more vigorously pursued by Grouchy than in reality he was, would have placed the Dyle between that general and the remains of his retreating army; that Wellington, too weak to withstand the French army, and moreover of too prudent a character to leave anything to chance, would have retired through the forest of Soignies, in the course of the evening and the night, to receive and strengthen Blucher in the neighbourhood of Brussels; that consequently Grouchy

being at liberty the next day, would rejoin him on his right; that they would advance together through the forest, on the traces of the English, and that they would not be able to come to action till one or two days later, under the walls of the Belgian capital.

The villages were so completely deserted by their frightened inhabitants, the minds of the people in the Belgian provinces which he had passed through were so frigid towards him, and the proceedings of his spies were so counteracted by the general antipathy to his cause, that he derived information only from chance, or from his own genius. The officers of his staff, and Marshal Soult himself, gave him opinions only instead of intelligence. His reconnoitring parties and advance posts could only venture a few paces beyond his army. Four or five leagues of plains, of valleys, of defiles, and of hills, without any intermediate corps of communication, separated him from Grouchy and his right wing. Ney, discontented and timid, in consequence of his recent faults, did not venture to assert or to counsel anything, in the natural apprehension of incurring the terrible responsibility of the fate of the whole army in the eyes of the nation and of the Emperor.

Napoleon, in short, had to depend upon himself, in the midst of a staff to which he was not yet accustomed, either too young or too old, new or worn out. Proper instruments were wanting. Finally, he had no rear to fall back upon, in the event of errors or reverses. This army risked or destroyed, everything around him was lost, and himself also. He could only fall back upon ruin. So heavy a weight would crush the soul even of a hero. To preserve full liberty of thought, and full power of mind, man must have a certain latitude of destiny to sustain him. This he no longer possessed, and it was his own fault. He had rashly incurred in quitting Elba one of those extremities which exceed human genius, and even the favours of fortune—a man against his own country and against Europe!

XXV

Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that on the eve of

Waterloo, his spirit, great as his destiny, failed him not. He possessed the *sang-froid*, the freedom of thought, the reflection, the impulse, and the activity of his best military days; he was as great and as powerful as he could possibly hope to be. Although for eighteen hours he had tasted neither sleep, nor repose, nor nourishment, yet he slept not while his troops were drying themselves, eating and sleeping around their bivouac fires, which were every moment extinguished by the continuous rains of the night

After having sent to Grouchy, who he thought was encamped at Wavres, an officer with orders to the marshal to send him during the night a division of 7,000 men, to support his right in the defiles of St. Lambert, whilst the grand army should be fighting Wellington at Waterloo, the Emperor left his bivouac on foot in the middle of the night, accompanied only by the marshal of his palace, Bertrand, an officer who had replaced Duroc in his confidence and in his heart. He passed through his line of guards. The forest of Soignies in his front appeared one entire conflagration amidst the trees, from the multitude of bivouac fires of the English troops. There was no longer any doubt as to the presence of Wellington's whole army on the morrow.

The whole space between the skirts of the forest and the hamlets of Braisne-la-Leud, Belle Alliance, and La Haie Sainte, was occupied by fires and bivouacs. The most profound silence reigned over the two armies and between them. The Emperor advanced as far as the shelter of a thick shrubbery which served as an inclosure and a natural palisade to the castle of Hougoumont, a fortified advance-post of the English army. It was then half-past two o'clock in the morning. While listening to the slightest noise, he heard the step of an enemy's column marching in the dark. He thought for a moment that Wellington was profiting by the night to raise his camp, and that this column was his rear guard, ascending from the plain towards the forest, to escape before day the pursuit of the French. The rain, which fell in torrents, drowned the noise of these footsteps in the dark. The Emperor could not comprehend the nature of the noise he had

heard, nor of the subsequent silence. Some officers whom he had sent further forward to reconnoitre, returned to tell him that nothing was stirring in the English army. At four o'clock his scouts brought him a peasant who had served as a guide to a brigade of Wellington's army, marching to its post on the extreme left. Two Belgian deserters who had just quitted their regiment, repeated that nothing in the enemy's army indicated any intention to retreat.

XXVI

In the commentary on his campaigns, which he sketched at a later period, Napoleon assures us that his heart was inspired with the greatest joy, on learning that Lord Wellington awaited him, and that in engaging with him he felt at length confident of victory. He returned exclaiming with jealous bitterness against the pretended ignorance of the English general, for daring to brave the army of Napoleon on the borders of a vast forest, which, in the event of a reverse, offered only one road for his retreat. We may credit the sincerity of Napoleon's joy at having to fight only the isolated army of Wellington, instead of the Anglo-allied army, which he might have had to brave farther on before Brussels; it was one last piece of good fortune which the rapidity and boldness of the English general had prepared for him. But in the position of Wellington, the choice of Waterloo as a field of battle was a further mark of that genius, at once resolute, powerful and prudent, which has characterised all the campaigns of this general in India, in Spain, and in Belgium.

As the principal general of the coalition, Wellington had two necessary points to combine in his tactics: to avoid falling back, for fear of uncovering and giving up Brussels, and finally to have to fight the greatest general of the most warlike army of modern times. In taking up a position on the eminences of the forest of Soignies, as the Thermopylæ of Belgium, he accomplished this first duty In fighting on the borders of a forest fortified on all its approaches, as well as by its own impenetrability, he had at once every pledge of victory, if

victory were possible against Napoleon, and of a secure retreat, if defeat were inevitable. He could contest from tree to tree, the immense woody space, inaccessible to the masses of the Emperor's cavalry and artillery. No other road than that of Brussels, which he occupied, could allow the French, if conquerors, to turn or surround him, and make prisoners of his defeated army. The formidable artillery which he possessed, by defending this unique route from position to position, must give to his army, even if vanquished, time to fall back, to re-form, and to join the Prussians at the opposite side of the forest. Waterloo was, therefore, an admirable field of battle, at once offensive and defensive, for a general who never risked his fortune on a single throw of the dice. The event has demonstrated this; and it is to be regretted that Napoleon has not acknowledged it himself with a more disinterested feeling of glory, and that he has obstinately devoted his understanding to prove that his conqueror was unworthy of measuring himself with him. These are the littlenesses of glory. Protestations do not alter events, or change historical personages. We should look our fortune in the face, as well when it is severe, as when it is complaisant. Genius should do justice to genius, even in an adversary; and defamation like this is not patriotism. It has neither exalted the one nor degraded the other.

XXVII.

The troops of Napoleon were bivouacked in the mud, and the artillery and cavalry could not manœuvre in the fields, they were so completely drenched. Day at length began to break, and the clouds were partially dissipated by the morning breeze that blew over the forest. A few faint sunbeams played upon the brushwood and the waving corn—the last sun that was to be seen by so many thousands of men, sacrificed before the close of day, not in the cause of humanity, but for the unbounded ambition of one man.

One of Grouchy's officers, who had left Gembloux, and not Wavres, at ten o'clock in the evening, brought the Emperor a despatch from that marshal. Grouchy said: "I am in pur-

suit of the Prussians. They are retreating before me by three routes; one of which seems to conduct a part of them to the army of Wellington, by Wavres; a second by Perwès to the heart of Belgium; and the third by Namur to the right. They have lost 20,000 men. Blucher is wounded in the arm, but commands still in spite of his wound." This news reassured the Emperor. He had nothing more to fear according to this information, than one body of the Prussian army inclining towards his right by the side of Wavres, but for which Grouchy, who he thought kept sight of that corps, would answer.

He felt once more secure, and waited upon a hillock in front of Planchenoit, until the increasing power of a summer sun should harden the earth under the wheels and horses, so as to allow his artillery and cavalry to manœuvre. It was eight o'clock, and his generals hastening around him in succession, announced the subsiding of the waters everywhere, and the hardening of the earth. A few of them only seemed to apprehend that this unavoidable delay of the attack, occasioned by the severity of the night and of the preceding days, would permit the English army to escape them. Marshal Ney also came to receive his final orders. "The enemy's army is superior to ours by more than a third," said Napoleon with serenity to his generals, "we have, however, ninety chances to ten that we shall conquer to-day." "Certainly," said Ney, "if Wellington is simple enough to wait for us; but his army is already in full retreat, and I have come to announce to your Majesty that his columns are disappearing, one after another, into the forest." "You are mistaken," replied Napoleon, with the assurance of genius which sees better with the understanding than ordinary people with their eyes; "you are mistaken; it is too late now for Wellington to order a retreat; the day is too far advanced, and we are too close to him; he would expose himself to certain destruction. He has thrown his die, and the game is now in our hands." On uttering these words of good omen, to inspire his generals with that confidence which is half the victory, he called for his charger, galloped from position to position, returned to his point of observation, reflected a moment on the dispositions which the nature of the

ground and the obstacles thrown up by the enemy suggested to him, and dictated his order of battle to Marshal Soult. His orderly officers quickly made copies of it, and his aides-de-camp carried them to the officers commanding the several corps.

XXVIII

In a few moments after, the entire French army, under arms, and divided into eleven columns, debouched out of the gorges and heights which surrounded Planchenoit, and deployed to take up their ground in front of the forest of Soignies. The disposition of the jutting hills over which they were spread made the French troops appear more numerous in the eyes of the English than they really were It might also be supposed that these heights and gorges concealed from the enemy still more troops held in reserve. Napoleon had drawn up his army in six triangles, of which the hills of Jemappes were the base, and of which the sides threatened at a distance the acclivities of the forest of Soignies; an able disposition, which gave solidity to the centre and activity to the wings; which further permitted each branch of these triangles in extending, to touch the corresponding branch of the contiguous triangle, and thus to form an indented but continuous line before the enemy. Profound meditation had inspired Napoleon with this plan in front of superior force

The army had scarcely occupied the different posts assigned to it, amidst an incessant clang of trumpets and rolling of drums, when Napoleon galloping with his staff to the summit of all these triangles of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, passed along them, amidst cries of "Vive l'Empereur!" from the summit to the base, and from the base to the summit, as if to impress upon the eyes and the souls of each of these 80,000 combatants the living image and cause of the general for whom they were going to conquer or die. His sight was to be for some a recompense for their death, for others an incitement to victory! One heart beat between these men and the Emperor. In such a moment they shared the same soul and the same cause!

When all is risked for one man, it is in him his followers live and die. The army was Napoleon!

Never before was it so entirely Napoleon as now. He was repudiated by Europe, and his army adopted him with idolatry; it voluntarily made itself the great martyr of his glory. At such a moment he must have felt himself more than man, more than a sovereign: for his subjects only bowed to his power, Europe to his genius; but his army bent in homage to the past, the present, and the future, and welcomed victory or defeat, the throne or death with its chief. It was determined on every thing, even on the sacrifice of itself, to restore him his Empire, or to render his last fall illustrious. Accomplices at Grenoble, pretorians at Paris, victims at Waterloo: such a sentiment in the generals and officers of Napoleon had in it nothing that was not in conformity with the habits and even the vices of humanity. His cause was their cause, his crime their crime, his power their power, his glory their glory. But the devotion of those 80,000 soldiers was more virtuous, for it was more disinterested. Who would know their names? Who would pay them for the shedding of their blood? The plain before them would not even preserve their bones! To have inspired such a devotion was the greatness of Napoleon; to evince it even to madness was the greatness of his army. This greatness, this devotion, this disinterested squandering of its own blood, this sacrifice of itself, not for its country, but for one man, on that day, absolved it from its fault. Through the blood it was going to shed France no longer saw its disaffection, no longer saw anything but its expiation and its martyrdom.

The soldiers seemed to understand him. Their acclamations bore a lugubrious and funereal accent, while their features displayed the pallid impression of a tragical resolution, and their looks the sadness of a farewell. It was no longer as in the early battles of Italy, of Egypt, and of Germany, the French gaiety of courage; it was the Roman gravity of Cæsar's soldiers, on the eve of Pharsalia. Such an army well commanded could effect every thing against ten armies; it could conquer well, and die with heroism

XXIX.

Amidst the echoes of these acclamations, which resounded even to the English army, Napoleon galloped, after the review, followed by some squadrons of his Imperial Guard, towards the central and elevated ground which he had chosen at a glance the evening before for his point of observation during the battle. This was a hill with a gentle slope on all sides, which was connected with the hamlet of Planchenoit, like a peninsula jutting into the plain, a little in advance of the wings of the army; resembling one of those Roman tumuli whereon the Consuls or the Emperors established in their encampments the pretorium of the army. The farm of Gros-Caillou, where the Emperor had slept some moments in the early part of the preceding night, stood some paces distant on his left, and the farm of La Belle Alliance at some paces on his right. This hillock bears the name of Vessemonde. The high road from Charleroi to Brussels follows the undulations of the crest of these heights; then, descending into the ravine which separated the two armies, it reascends to the hamlets of Mont-Saint-Jean and Waterloo, before it reaches the last acclivities, beyond which it loses itself in the shadows of the forest of Soignies, the principal encampment of Wellington. At a short distance from the farm of La Belle Alliance, this road from Charleroi to Brussels, the principal artery of the French army, was cut at the bottom of the hollow by a transverse high road, deeply embanked, leading from Wavres to the forest of Nivelles, a winding road, frequently hidden by the inflections of the soil, by screens of trees, and amidst water-courses which are called the defiles of St. Lambert. It was these defiles, which might conceal the mystery of the battle by seasonably giving admission either to reinforcements or to the enemy, that the Emperor had assigned as a rendezvous to the division demanded from Grouchy. From the eminence of Vessemonde he took in with a single look the whole of the vast scene upon which the first cannon shot was about to call into action 200,000 men

Having suffered for some days past from a rash, brought on by sleepless nights and agitation of mind, which made the saddle painful and irksome to him, the Emperor dismounted as soon as he had chosen the eminence whence he intended to combat the enemy with eye and thought. He ordered a thick litter of straw to be laid down on the ground, drenched and miry from the late heavy rains, to establish himself thereon with his plans, his telescopes, his papers, his chief of the staff, Soult, and his officers. A detached house, at some paces distance, called La Maison-d'Ecosse, furnished the straw, the benches, and the table for this last-day bivouac.

Before unmasking to the enemy his plan of battle, by ordering the first movement of his troops, he gazed again for a long time on the position of the English army

XXX.

The Duke of Wellington, surrounded by the Prince of Orange, the officers of the Duke of Brunswick (who had been killed at Quatre-Bras), leading his corps of Germans, Lieutenants-General Sir Thomas Picton, Sir George Cooke, Byng, Maitland, Macdonald, Lord Saltoun, Woodford, and a great number of general officers, volunteers of all nations, eager to take a part in so memorable a battle, under the most consummate general of the coalition, was, on his part, observing the movements of the Emperor's eleven columns on the hill sides of La Belle Alliance, and completing his dispositions for defence against those points of attack which the aspect of the ground, and the nature of the enemy's troops, led him to suppose were contemplated by the Emperor. Two armies, under two great generals, in such a state of abeyance, and with such an alternative, resemble two *athletæ*, who measure each other's strength for a long time with the eye, and who seek mutually to deceive each other by gestures before they approach and grapple in a struggle of life and death. General Vincent, Austrian ambassador at Paris, a military man of the school of the Arch-Duke Charles; Pozzo di Borgo, aide-de-camp to Alexander, a personal enemy

of Napoleon's, and competent as his countryman to divine and comprehend him; and a great number of other diplomatists, or foreign princes, felt honoured in serving as aides-de-camp to Wellington. He gave them from time to time orders to go and remodel his wings, and to push forward or withdraw his advance posts. They were seen from the hillock occupied by the Emperor, riding from Hougoumont to Waterloo and to La Haie Sainte, and returning in full gallop to the shady terrace of the forest, where the general-in-chief was preparing to repel the assault of these positions.

XXXI.

The Duke of Wellington, whose reserves were scarcely visible on the eminences of the forest of Soignies, occupied, with his principal army, a long terrace bordering on the wood, and naturally fortified by an abrupt slope descending to the hollow high road of Charleroi. It fronted thus the village of Waterloo, which comprised about thirty farms and cottages, enclosed within high hedges, and screened by some of those lofty elms which in Flanders line the cultivated fields and pasture grounds in the vicinity of houses and hamlets. He occupied, and at the same time superintended from above, this village, which was the centre of his position. The Guards, a chosen body of English troops, under the command of Sir George Cooke, formed a division of his army. The advantage of communication throughout the line was afforded by the solid road from Charleroi to Nivelles, which passed along under the terrace of Soignies, and thus formed a chain of connexion between his principal positions. His right, composed of the first regiment of the Guards, commanded by General Maitland, and thrown forward towards the Emperor, was covered by the ravine of Braisne. His left was formed of the Coldstream, and third regiment of Guards, under the orders of General Byng, and occupying an eminence which commanded Ter-la-Haie. In front of his right centre, an old building, the remains of the castle of Hougoumont, with its gardens sur-

rounded by moats, its indented walls, its palisaded courts, its hedges, its trees, and its stagnant waters, gave him a support at once threatening and impregnable against the impetuosity of the French charges. The farm of La Haie Sainte, in advance of his left centre, gave equal solidity to this advanced wing of his army. He further hoped to communicate, in case of necessity, by the extremity of this left wing, and by the retired village of Ohain, with the troops which Blucher might push forward at the sound of his cannon upon the right wing of Napoleon.

Such was the strong and able disposition of the English general, at ten o'clock on the morning of the 18th June. It exhibited the rational and reflecting genius of the warrior who, having had to contend for seven years in Spain, with unequal forces, against the masses and the boldness of the Emperor's armies, had always availed himself of the advantages offered by nature, to enable him to withstand the impetuosity and the numbers of his enemy, and fortified his field of battle on the model of the Romans. Confident in his troops, who, on their side, relied on the prudence of their general, his system of war, almost everywhere defensive, presented a combination of natural obstacles, of fire, and of steel, to the uncovered battalions that were opposed to him. He rarely charged the enemy, but he wore him out by inefficient attacks broken by the strength of his entrenchments, until that enemy, wearied and cut up, recoiled, so to speak, upon himself, and left him, from mere exhaustion, the field of battle and the opportunity of pursuit. A system at once humane and economical of the blood of his own army, of which he was sparing, wherein patience constitutes the genius of the general, and unshaken firmness the heroism of the army. But such a system of tactics required an army like the English, formed, and disciplined by, and habituated for sixteen years to Wellington; an army, every general of which had identified himself by long confidence with his chief, of which every battalion was a wall constantly renewed when broken by the enemy's fire, and every soldier a citizen of the camp, bearing in his heart the cause of Great Britain.

Such was the army of Wellington. It numbered only 37,000

English troops,* whose example, and whose firmness, were impressed upon the rest of the auxiliaries, less consummate than themselves, of which it was composed.

A pyramidal tumulus of earth, covered with green sod, and surmounted by the Belgian lion, now rises on the spot which was then occupied by Lord Wellington and the staff of the coalition. The soul of Waterloo was there!

XXXII.

Contrary to his custom, Napoleon seemed to hesitate for a long time, and to let those hours of the morning slip away, when the soldier, refreshed by sleep, strengthened by nourishment, and animated by the hopes that sparkle in the sunshine, is more impetuous than towards the close of day. He was giving in his own mind time for the arrival of Grouchy's auxiliary division, which he had summoned the evening before by the officer he had sent from Planchenoit to Wavres. No answer had arrived from Wavres. "I received," he said, in a second despatch to Grouchy, "your reports from Gembloux yesterday; you only speak of two Prussian columns; my information mentions a third marching upon Wavres. I am going to attack the English army at Waterloo, on the borders of the forest of Soignies. Pay no attention to the Prussian columns which are pressing upon your right, but follow that which is marching upon Wavres, draw near to me, and acquaint me with all your movements." An officer, followed by some dragoons, galloped off to bear this order to Grouchy, on the chance of finding him in a cross country direction.

This officer had scarcely disappeared when the Emperor gave orders for the attack. The tirailleurs, like a curtain destined to cover the movements of the army with a cloud of smoke, spread themselves in groups upon the plain. General

* Siborne makes the effective strength of the Anglo allied army that fought at Waterloo as follows:—Infantry, 49,608; Cavalry, 12,402; Artillery, 5,645. Total, 67,655. Only 23,991 of these were British, according to the same authority.—*Translator.*

Reille pushed forward with his divisions to attack the castle of Hougoumont, the advanced centre of the English left. The enclosures of Hougoumont were defended by a detachment of light infantry under the command of Colonel Macdonald and of Lord Saltoun. Macdonald quickly adopted every measure of defence which his position permitted; but the French fire was so warm, that Wellington, on seeing the heavy columns that were advancing on Hougoumont, sent thither some of his best troops. He detached from General Byng's division the second, or Coldstream Guards, commanded by Colonel Woodford, to reinforce Macdonald. Colonel Woodford assumed the command of the troops at Hougoumont at the critical moment when the French were on the point of entering it, and repulsed the attack. The Emperor had anticipated this movement of his adversary. Reille's assault on Hougoumont was only a feint, the object of which was to draw the attention and the troops of the English to their left, to weaken their centre, to sweep it away, and thus to separate the army into two, throwing back the left upon Grouchy, whilst Reille and D'Erlon, who commanded between Rossomme and Hougoumont, should crush the right. Mont-Saint-Jean, the central and elevated position of the English army, was, in reality, the only object of the Emperor. From the distance at which he was placed, he could not ascertain with precision the height and bearings of the acclivities which led to the summit of this plateau, the natural fortress of Wellington. The thickness of the crops which covered the fields, the trees, the hedges, and the distance which levelled everything to the eye, deceived him in the elevation of the ground. To the right and left more gentle and accessible slopes would have led his columns to the attack of the English camp. But everything, even the horizon, deceived him on this fatal day. The scarlet uniforms of the English regiments and squadrons, drawn up in order of battle on these acclivities of Mont-Saint-Jean, spread before-hand upon these hills the colour of blood, prophetic of that which was destined some hours after to drench the plains.

XXXIII

The unequal and scattered fire of the tirailleurs of both armies increased in proportion as they approached each other, and engaged in greater numbers. This was nothing more than the mutual provocation which animates and draws on the combatants, for as yet the cannon had not begun to thunder. At eleven o'clock it commenced on the left of the French position, at the moment that Reille's divisions were retiring from the castle of Hougoumont. Four hundred guns, in line on both sides of the basin of Waterloo, seemed to reply simultaneously to this signal. The thundering noise of these batteries rent and scattered the clouds which had hung until then upon the heights, and the summer sun shone for a moment in the pure sky; but the immense smoke of the cannonade soon spreading from Hougoumont to the defiles of St. Lambert, rose up the hills and covered the valley, like a heavy mist torn by the gleaming of an hundred thousand flashes of lightning. Eighty pieces of cannon in battery before Hougoumont replied to the English batteries in the rear and above that position, which carried death into the attacking columns of Guilleminot, chief of the staff, and of Jerome Bonaparte, recently an inglorious king, but on this day a gallant soldier. In spite of the murderous fire of the English troops, who defended from tree to tree the wood which surrounded the castle, Jerome Bonaparte, Guilleminot, and Reille carried this enclosure, which was strewn with dead bodies. But on reaching the walls, the dykes, and the hedges, which served as so many defences to the castle, the French columns falling fast, recoiled, hesitated, advanced, and again recoiled under the grape shot of forty pieces of artillery, and the musketry of the battalions ensconced within the courtyards, in the gardens, and behind the walls. Reille reinforced his columns in proportion to the desperate resistance they experienced. Wellington galloping up, surrounded by his staff, to the extremity of the terrace which commands Hougoumont, encouraged by his presence and his gestures the intrepidity of his troops. He dispatched

General Byng with a last brigade of the Guards, to mix in the action. A long, terrible, and furious combat took place, with varying success, under the walls and in the orchards of Hougoumont. Seven times the French troops penetrated through the breach to the courtyard of the castle, and as often were they driven back with the bayonet, by the grenadiers of the Guards. At length the howitzers, more destructive even than men, set fire to the great barn, the out-houses, stacks of corn, and the timber work. The strong walls of the old castle resisted the fire; but the rebounding of the flames, and the dense volumes of smoke which enveloped it made its further occupation intolerable. No one could hope to return from it alive. The wounded officers and soldiers deposited in the barns perished there from suffocation, and nothing but the chapel escaped the fury of the raging element. This appearing to them a signal of divine protection, the troops regained fresh courage, and swore to hold out until death. Neither side was vanquished, nothing was victorious except the fire which devoured all. The English, unshaken upon the rising ground which commands the castle, retired only out of reach of the flames, and were merely separated from the enemy by the conflagration! 2,500 men of both armies found at once their death and their tomb under the burning fragments of the building.*

One of Reille's officers announced this resistance to the Emperor. He cast his eyes on a plan of Hougoumont which lay open before him, and indicating with his finger the site for a battery of eight howitzers near the castle, said with an air of indifference, "There! take possession of the walls, and have done with it."

XXXIV

The Emperor had listened to and looked on this *melée* from his eminence, without appearing much surprised at its result. His serious thoughts did not lie in that direction;

* Six thousand men of both armies are said to have perished in the attack and defence of Hougoumont.—*Translator.*

but, as we have said, in an attack on Mont-Saint-Jean, Wellington's centre, and the very heart of the struggle. He summoned Ney, until then inactive, and said to him, "This, M. le Marechal, is a day and an action worthy of you; I give you the command of the centre, and it is you who are to gain the battle." Then pointing out to him Mont-Saint-Jean, he ordered him to ascend it, and carry the centre of the enemy's army. Ney, recovering all his confidence, and all the energy of his greatest days, galloped off to form his columns and to storm the position indicated at the very first word of the Emperor.

The French troops rushed forward, and surrounded the enclosure of the castle on every side. The cavalry, in the impulse of their charge, reached an elevated ground which commanded the rear of Hougoumont. There the horse of General Cubieres was killed under him. The general himself owed his life to Colonel Woodford of the Guards. General Sir George Cooke, who commanded the English division, lost an arm in the last assault of the Imperial Guard. At this juncture Wellington uttered the magic words, "Up Guards, and at them!" which electrified the English army, and rallied around him all who yet survived the carnage.* Woodford maintained his position at Hougoumont from noon till eight o'clock in the evening.

Meanwhile the conflagration at Hougoumont had not slackened the action on that point, where Reille and his divisions, after having attacked, had to maintain their own position and defend themselves in turn. The Scotch regiments, dislodged from the castle, and now strengthened by two fresh brigades, under cover of the English batteries, threatened to charge the French battalions and turn their centre. Four hundred pieces of cannon approaching each other at each discharge, ploughed with their shot and shells the earth, the trees, the crops, and the combatants. Every hillock, every eminence in the ascent of both positions, attacked by turns,

* The magic words, "Up Guards, and at them!" were uttered at a later and much more critical period of the action.—*Translator.*

occupied one moment, cannonaded the next, became a scene of fresh carnage. Prostrate horses, exploded shells, mutilated bodies of cavalry and infantry strewed the soil, and drenched the plains with blood to the extent of a square league; but neither the fire, nor the steel, nor the death of so many brave men could make either army yield an inch of ground. The bodies of the English, French, and Scotch troops, fallen at their posts, and keeping their ranks even after death, still occupied the positions no longer held by living combatants.

La Haie Sainte, which had been carried by the French, yielded them nothing but dead bodies and calcined walls D'Erlon and his divisions, nearer to the left of Napoleon, became insensibly engaged, drawn on by the danger of Reille's troops His artillery covered with an incessant fire the heights in his front, but his bullets were lost in the rising ground behind which Wellington had taken the precaution to cover his line, while the English artillery firing into the French columns, which were necessarily exposed in their advance, swept away whole ranks of D'Erlon's divisions.

XXXV.

At this moment Ney, who had just arrived at his post in front of Mont-Saint-Jean, was waiting for the last orders of the Emperor. General Drouot hastening from Rossomme, put an end to his impatience. "Go and tell the Emperor," said Ney, as the latter was about to return, "that I shall accomplish everything he expects of me; and that Mont-Saint-Jean will give its name to one of the most immortal battles of the army."

Drouot returned to the Emperor, and found him occupied with other thoughts. With his telescope pointed at the distant defiles of St. Lambert, and towards the bare eminences which command those defiles in rear and to the right, he thought he could perceive a dark mass on the horizon, but was uncertain if it was fixed or movable, or whether it was a forest, a cloud, or a body of troops in position. Turning towards Marshal Soult, his major-general, he handed him the telescope, begged him to look, and asked him what he saw, and what he conjec-

tured. "I think it seven or eight thousand men," replied the marshal; "probably the detachment which your Majesty demanded from Grouchy." But this body appeared so immovable and so confused to the eye, that the numerous officers of the Emperor's staff, looking one after another towards the same point, asserted, some that it was a forest, others that it was one of those mists which the repercussion of the air, occasioned by the discharges of artillery, had rolled to a distance upon the hills. In this state of uncertainty the Emperor ordered General Subervie, whose squadrons were the nearest to St. Lambert, to detach himself from the right wing, and to advance with 3,000 horse to the heights of St. Lambert, to observe and hold himself ready to fight this mysterious corps, if it was Prussian, and to precede and guide it to Waterloo if it was French.

Subervie and Domont had scarcely reached with their cavalry the point and distance assigned by the Emperor, when a Prussian prisoner, surprised by a cavalry patrol between Wavres and St. Lambert, was brought before the Emperor, and declared that the army perceived in the distance was the advance guard of 30,000 men whom the Prussian general Bulow, Blucher's second in command, was leading to join Wellington's army. The prisoner further said that Blucher and the remainder of the Prussian army had slept the night before at Wavres, and that they had not seen the army of Grouchy either in front or rear

XXXVI.

The Emperor, astonished, and seeking in vain to explain this presence of a Prussian corps on his right, and this total disappearance of Grouchy, instantly wrote a third despatch to this marshal. "The battle," he said, "is at this moment waging on the line of Waterloo. Manœuvre rapidly in my direction, and fall upon the troops that are endeavouring to disquiet my right wing. I am this moment informed that Bulow is to attack me in flank. We think we can perceive his corps upon the heights of St. Lambert. Lose not a moment in rejoining me and crushing Bulow."

The officer who carried this order galloped off at hazard in the direction which he expected would lead him to the army of Grouchy. Domont and Subervie had scarcely arrived on the heights of St. Lambert when they sent to inform the Emperor that the corps which had been partly seen was in reality a Prussian corps, and that they were sending out detachments on their wings in search of Grouchy. The Emperor receiving these communications, one on the other, could not account for the silence and the vacancy observable in the direction of Wavres, where Grouchy's cannon ought now to be thundering on the rear of Bulow. Uneasy though confident in the manœuvres of Grouchy, which every moment might bring to light, he resolved, notwithstanding, to uncover a little his line of battle on the right, to make head against the contingencies with which Bulow's approach threatened him on the side of St. Lambert. He sent orders, accordingly, to Count de Lobau, one of his confidential generals, to quit the position he occupied in front of the English left, and to advance with 10,000 men upon the gorge of St. Lambert, in a position that would enable him, in case of necessity, to resist 30,000. Lobau obeyed, carrying off 10,000 combatants from the struggle in which they were engaged, who were thus lost to victory in an intermediate post of observation, where he could neither fight nor manœuvre against Wellington.

This unhappy, and perhaps excessive prudence of the Emperor, at a moment when time and rapidity would compensate for deficiency of number, weakened his army, already diminished by Grouchy's corps, to the extent of 13,000 soldiers and several excellent generals; the line of battle now counting no more than 60,000 men against 90,000. He did not, however, trouble himself about this inferiority occasioned by an excess of caution; but turning, after he had given the orders, towards Marshal Soult who held the pen, and continuing, in his mathematical language, to calculate the probable chances of victory or defeat, which he had enumerated the morning before the battle. "We had this morning," he said to Soult, "ninety chances out of a hundred in our favour; the arrival of Bulow deprives us of thirty; we have, therefore, left sixty against

forty. If Grouchy repairs the fault he committed yesterday in halting at Gembloux, and if he sends his detachment promptly, the victory will be only the more decisive, for Bulow's corps will be totally destroyed!"

Admirable *sang-froid* of a mathematical genius of war, which, by dint of handling the masses on paper and in the field, could reduce victory or defeat to the mechanism of numbers and manœuvres, irrespective of those accidents which Providence reserves to itself, and of the moral position of the combatants which increase or diminish armies by the force of sentiment. In his calculation he did not sufficiently reflect on the resolution with which Wellington had inspired his troops, to conquer or die at their post on the slopes whereon he had fixed them.

XXXVII.

During these vacillations at head quarters, Ney, who was ignorant of them, formed the centre of the army into three columns, and descended the slopes of La Belle Alliance at their head, to storm the eminence of Mont-Saint-Jean. Generals Durutte, Donzelot, and Marcognet commanded each a column under him. Durutte diverged towards the English left; Donzelot, announcing his approach by a cannonade of thirty pieces of artillery, towards their right, to ascend beyond Hougoumont the eminences of the forest of Soignies; while Marcognet commanded the centre column Ney flew from one to another wherever the danger was most pressing. The three charges were irresistible. Durutte carried all the fortified hamlets between Mont-Saint-Jean and the extreme right. Marcoguet charged the two brigades of Generals Perponcher and Picton. Picton fell dead in the arms of his soldiers. The Belgians retreated in disorder; and the first English line dispersed and retreated towards the summit. Donzelot also drove back Byng's battalions from La Haie Sainte to the heights above Hougoumont. Shouts of victory arose and were echoed from each of the three French columns. They were repeated in the intervals of their firing, which reached even as far as the baggage of the English and Belgian armies, who thought the battle already lost. The wounded that were

being conveyed from the field of battle, and General Marcognet's round shot, which shattered the trees of the forest, and ploughed up the Brussels road, frightened these groups of non-combatants, the necessary encumbrance of a camp. They fled, spreading around them a current of panic, which was soon increased by the equipages on the road to Brussels. The Emperor perceived this confusion, and thought he saw in it a symptom of defeat. Ney, who was nearer to the scene of action, found it necessary to summon the artillery of reserve posted at La Belle Alliance, to complete this imaginary rout. The artillery descended the slope from La Belle Alliance, at a gallop, to the right and rear of Ney's column, but the ground being cut up by the heavy rains of the previous day, the wheels sunk to the axle-trees. Every effort of men and horses was fruitless to release the gun carriages from the mud and mire. Ney, in expectation of the arrival of his artillery, pursued his course, still fighting, towards Mont-Saint Jean, and on arriving at the last eminence he thought he had won the day.

XXXVIII

Wellington, who was on horseback in the midst of his staff, under a lofty tree, an object which was frequently struck by the French round shot, saw the disaster which had befallen the artillery in the hollow. He galloped towards two of his regiments of dragoons, drawn up on the edge of the slope. He ordered the curb-chains to be taken off the bridles, that the horses having the greater impetus uncontrolled by their riders, might crush the French cavalry down the slope under their irresistible weight and impulse; a desperate manœuvre worthy of the Numidians against the Romans, and which the height and impetuosity of the English horses rendered still more desperate. He then caused brandy to be distributed to the dragoons to intoxicate the men with liquid fire, whilst the sound of the clarion should intoxicate the horses; and launched them himself at full speed down the declivity of Mont-Saint-Jean.*

* We are authorised by high military authority to deny this statement.—*The Publishers.*

These two regiments, precipitated like an avalanche upon the French infantry drawn up in squares behind Ney, slashed in amongst them with the velocity of a rock torn from its bed. reached the French batteries imbedded in the mud at the bottom of the valley, sabring the gunners, cutting the traces, overturning the carriages, and thus extinguishing for the remainder of the day the fire of this artillery. Colonel Chandon lost his life on this occasion. Marshal Ney, who had witnessed from above this disaster of his artillery, and the havoc committed in his squares by the English dragoons, launched against them General Milhaut's regiments of cuirassiers. The cuirassiers, with less impetuosity, but with equal courage and more active horses, charged the dragoons, whose horses, though of greater power, were less manageable to the rein. One half of them perished in the combat, and the mutilated remainder were driven back by the cuirassiers upon the heights. The artillery was avenged, but the feat was accomplished.

XXXIX.

Meanwhile Ney was advancing slowly, but constantly, with his columns of attack. On reaching the palisaded entrenchments, he charged the Hanoverians who occupied them with Milhaut's cuirassiers, and his light cavalry, who routed the Hanoverians, and killed General Ompteda, who commanded them. Major-General Ponsonby, who had been sent to replace the Hanoverians with three regiments of dragoons, also fell beneath the deadly thrusts of a party of lancers. Ney succeeded in reaching, under a canopy of fire, of shell and round shot, the topmost slope which led to the terrace of Mont-Saint-Jean. Here, as at the foot of the walls of a fortress, French and English, officers, soldiers, men and horses, some endeavouring to scramble up, others dashing them down again, all striking, were mingled together, under a continuous shower of balls from 200 pieces of English artillery; firing into each others breasts, sabring, bayoneting, tearing each other, making of the dead bodies of men and horses, some a rampart and others bloody steps, to defend, or to escalade the glorious summit. Ney, who saw amidst the smoke the first

French uniforms at the brink of the plateau, rushed forward to seize his victory, sending word at the same time to the Emperor, that one last effort of the reserve would give him the battle, and that the English, in confusion, were already sending off their field equipage to Brussels.

"I have them, then, these English!" cried the Emperor, with triumphant visage, voice, and gesture, in the midst of his staff; his bosom at length relieved from a terrible load of anxiety. He remounted his horse, and galloped to the generals of his guard, whom he ordered to form their columns and fly to the support of Ney. Whilst he was riding to and fro in the valley from corps to corps, to animate his impatient reserves, a round shot from the English batteries killed General Devaux, of the artillery, by his side. He saw him fall with regret. But the heat of the action gave him no time to deplore a single loss; he returned to his post, and again dismounted to observe the execution of the orders given to his reserves, and the final triumph of Ney.

The intoxication of victory at length displayed itself in his features. With his arms crossed on his breast, he walked backwards and forwards, amidst the plans of the battle unfolded at his feet; his eyes fixed on the immovable smoke of Mont-Saint-Jean, which neither advanced nor retired, in spite of the incessant thunder that issued from those dense clouds. Behind those clouds, however, he seemed to contemplate beforehand the fate of the battle, and that of Europe, already visible to him alone. Marshal Soult, with a face of bronze, a warrior whose *sang-froid* was never unbent, or overcast from the alternate triumphs or discouragements of war, limped after the Emperor, receiving his impressions in hints, transmitting his orders, and sharing and sustaining his confidence. All the intervening ground between La Haie Sainte and Saint Jean was swept of the enemy's troops. The French army covered with its columns, its squares, and its reserves already formed, the acclivities visible to the eye of the forest of Soignies. The slackened fire of the English artillery seemed, by these long intermissions, to indicate batteries silenced in succession by the sabres of Ney's cuirassiers. Nearly all the Emperor's staff

being sent off in different directions, bearers of his final orders to the reserves and the guard, Rossomme presented the aspect of a bivouac full of leisure and security, after the fatigues of a victory, in which the general has nothing further to do than to order the pursuit, and complete the glorious results.

Behind the English army, on the other side of the forest, everything, on the contrary, indicated confusion and the commencement of a defeat. The road to Brussels, and the borders of the fields on each side, were crowded with the wounded. dragging themselves onwards, and sprinkling the road with their blood, or being borne by the sick waggons to the neighbouring cottages. A long column of panic-stricken peasants, of women, old men, and children, driving their flocks before them, or carrying off their furniture and effects in waggons; soldiers, officers, and generals struck by the enemy's balls, horses dying by the sides of the ditches, military servants hurrying to save the equipages of their masters, formed over a space of four leagues nothing but one mass of fugitives from the field of battle to the gates of the capital. The cannon, which had been booming since eleven o'clock in the morning, approaching and increasing in volume, had rent the air and dismayed all hearts in the streets of Brussels. The entire population had quitted their houses to question each other in the public places The rumour of Napoleon's victory, which should yield Belgium up to his arms, and for the third time turn its flourishing fields into the distracted and sanguinary arena of Europe's contentions, passed from mouth to mouth. The people were panic-struck, the princes, the nobility, and the wealthy inhabitants dismantled their hotels, and fled with their families on the road to Antwerp.

XL.

Such at six o'clock in the evening was the striking contrast in the aspect of the two causes in both armies.

In the midst of the battle—Wellington, straitened and almost forced from his final position, between the skirts of the forest and the slopes of Mont-Saint-Jean, the summit of which was nearly attained by Ney, and subsequently carried by the terrible

guard of Napoleon—his regiments dreadfully cut up, and thousands of their dead left behind them upon the slopes of La Haie Sainte, of Hougoumont, and of Waterloo—eleven of his generals dead around him, and amongst them his friend and right-hand general, Picton—eight of his seventeen aides-de-camp killed or wounded—Blucher vanquished and wandering at a distance from him in the plains of Namur—and Bulow, whom he had been expecting all the day, invisible to the officers whom he sent every hour to observe the horizon on the side of Wavres!

But the fortune of Wellington, entirely at fault in everything that surrounded him, was all centred in himself, and in the unshaken resolution of dying or conquering with which he had inspired his army. Having already had seven horses worn out or killed under him, Wellington mounted the eighth, and galloped from brigade to brigade, to inspire with a few words order, activity, enthusiasm, confidence, courage, contempt of death, a sense of duty, and the cool but invincible heroism of a free people; and returned the next moment to resume his post of battle under the lofty oak of Waterloo, that his officers should not wander about in search of him on every change in the action that required his presence. There he remained exposed to the balls which rattled in showers amongst the [illegible] the tree, looking no longer for victory but for night [illegible] now his only hope, could alone bring him the Prussians, through the darkness and the defiles of St. Lambert.

But night came not to his wish, and the columns of the guard were already in motion to storm the terrace of Mont * Saint-Jean, under the eyes of Wellington, and yet no sign of the Prussians!

XLI.

By a strange, and perhaps a fatal chance of battle, which paralyzed his soul, dissipated his powers, and withheld his arm when about to strike the final blow for which there was yet

* This is an error; the Duke's charger, Copenhagen, bore his Grace through the day.—*Translator.*

time, it was the Emperor who first saw the Prussians, very distant, and still few in number, behind the summits of the hills of St. Lambert. Let us now see what was passing, equally unknown to Napoleon and to Wellington during these mystifications, at the armies of Blucher and of Grouchy.

The latter, as we have seen, by his involuntary delay at Gembloux, having lost sight of Blucher, could not ascertain the following day in what direction to pursue him. This hesitation had given Blucher time to reorganise his troops at Wavres, to inform Lord Wellington that he was about to approach him towards Brussels, and to order at once in that direction the 30,000 fresh men under Bulow. It was, therefore, agreed upon that whichever of the two allied generals should be first attacked by the Emperor, should accept the battle, and resist without yielding an inch of ground, till the arrival of the other who was to advance during the action and attack the army of Napoleon in flank.

This convention was the secret of the obstinate resolution of Wellington to fight till victory or death should decide the fate of the battle on the narrow borders of the forest. Blucher informed of this on the night of the 17th, by the despatches of the English general, put his troops in motion at daybreak on the 18th, to reach the position of Waterloo, over the immense distance which lay between it and him on the eve of the battle. Wellington, without being certain, presumed such would be the case. The uncertainty of the positions occupied by the Emperor prevented Blucher and Bulow from communicating by couriers with the English general, and all was, therefore, conjecture and obscurity between them. Meanwhile Blucher was now at four leagues from the field of battle, preceded by the first corps of Bulow, marching with precaution and frequently stopping to ascertain by the sound of the cannon, the proper direction, so as not to go beyond the line, and be cut off by Napoleon's right wing. The Prussian army, therefore, dragged on slowly, rather than marched, amidst deep gorges, narrow, inundated, and muddy, hollowed out of the chalky soil, between the high passes of the defiles of La Chapelle.

It was there that the Emperor had sent orders by three messengers, during the preceding evening and night, to Grouchy, to post a detachment of 7,000 men first, and then to advance in full force himself, to communicate with, and join the Emperor Fatality, distance, uncertainty of the direction to be followed to meet with Grouchy, and the imprudence of the major-general in confiding to single officers without escort such important orders, had led those despatches astray. Marshal Grouchy had no intelligence of the Emperor, but was wandering about, executing the order that he had received to follow Blucher, looking for the Prussians, but not finding them, fearing equally to be out of the Emperor's reach, if he moved too far towards Namur, and to allow the Prussians to reorganise and escape after their defeat, if he quitted them too soon to approach Napoleon. A complicated and fatal position, which ignorance has turned into treason or incapacity, and which was nothing more than the literal execution of the orders of Napoleon, the forced caution of a general feeling his way when too much detached from his centre, and equally fearing to follow too closely, or too decidedly violate an imprudent order.

XLII.

It is quite true, however, that Grouchy's generals, and amongst others Excelmans, a consummate and adventurous soldier, in advance of Grouchy on the track of the Prussians, had informed him that Blucher and Bulow were inclining towards Wavres to effect a junction with the English. It is also true that the marshal's other generals, Gérard and Rumigny, and some colonels of the army, having halted at noon on the 18th, at the village of Walain, between Wavres and Gembloux, had heard the cannon of Waterloo, from the summit of a pavilion in the garden of their quarters, and had exclaimed on calculating the degree of sound: "That is the cannon of Wagram!" The marshal, on being informed of the circumstance, went also to listen to the still increasing cannonade, and the owner of the house being interrogated by him, had indicated the forest of Soignies as the focus of this tremendous firing.

General Gérard, whose blood was boiling with impatience, had cried out to the marshal: "Let us march towards the cannonade!" General Valazé, running up at the same noise, with a country guide, exclaimed, as he pointed in the direction of Mont-Saint-Jean: "There is the battle! That's the direction of the battle!" The guide confirmed the exclamations of the generals, and told the marshal that he would undertake to conduct the army thither in three hours. The fiery Colonel Briqueville, as Excelmans, Gérard, and Valazé had done, cried: "Let us follow the sound! Let us march to the cannonade!"

Even the dragoons, grouped around their officers, demanded to be led in the direction of the sound so attractive to the warrior, pointing towards some light ash-coloured clouds on the horizon, rising slowly in the heavens over the hills, and asserting that they were caused by explosions of powder, shining in the sun and put in motion by the wind. Grouchy, not considering himself summoned by the Emperor, and fearful of failing in his duty by quitting the enemy near Wavres, restrained his impatience, and pursued a route in a parallel direction to Napoleon instead of marching directly to him. Excelmans alone, carried forward by the true instinct of war, advanced with his dragoons to the Dyle, and would have crossed that river with them. But being recalled by an order from the marshal he was compelled to relinquish his bold attempt, and to stifle his presentiment. That presentiment would have saved Napoleon. Grouchy's passive obedience ruined him. Some hours after, General Berthesène, of Vandamme's corps, approaching Wavres, perceived from the heights the firing at Waterloo, and Prussian columns advancing towards it. He informed Grouchy of this, but the latter said, "Tell the general to rest tranquil; we are in the proper direction; we have news of the Emperor, and it is upon Wavres that he has ordered us to march."

It was only then, in fact about four o'clock in the evening, that the marshal received the Emperor's second order, the officer who bore it having wandered about for nine hours in search of him. He might have understood by the length of the battle, and by the tremendous cannonading, the probable occasion Napoleon had for his right wing, and therefore should have

approached him more directly than by Wavres. He did nothing of the kind, and the event has proved that he was wrong. He made Vandamme attack Wavres. This was still more time fruitlessly thrown away. When General Gérard of Vandamme's division was ordered to carry the village, defended by a weak rear-guard entrenched behind walls, he turned towards one of his aides-de-camp, M. de Rumigny, and said to him with bitterness: "When a man of courage is the powerless witness of everything that has passed here since morning, when he receives orders like this, and duty compels him to obey, nothing remains for him but to die." A quarter of an hour after this he fell under the wall of Wavres, with a ball in his chest: and his soldiers having caught him in their arms he languished in slow agony, deploring, not his death, but the useless manner in which a life had been sacrificed which was devoted to the army and his country. Treason was alien to the heart of Grouchy, who was a consummate and intrepid general, and more bound up in Napoleon's cause than any other by his struggle against the Duke d'Angoulême in the south, and by the recompense he had received for it from the Emperor in the dignity of marshal of France. His fault lay in not disobeying the Emperor, by obeying the more imperative inspiration of the cannon. The Emperor himself had evidently committed a still graver fault by removing to too great a distance from a wing so necessary to his army, in the presence of two armies, each of which could cope with his own. He had presumed too much on the defeat of the Prussians the evening before, and on his victory over the English in the morning. To despise one's enemy is the pledge of success at the commencement of a struggle between nations; but it is the snare of a conqueror, after long campaigns in which he himself has taught his rivals the art of war.

XLIII.

At the moment the reserves were advancing to support Ney, the Emperor, who only asked an hour from fortune, and who thought he had obtained it, heard in the intermission of the

cannonade from Mont-Saint-Jean, distant discharges from the side of St. Lambert. He did not trouble himself about these, and scarcely removed his eyes from the point of attack where Ney, under the fire of the English guns, was waiting for his reinforcements which had nearly reached him at the foot of the terrace. Napoleon thought that these discharges indicated nothing more than a chance encounter, upon his extreme right, between Grouchy's division and the advance guard of Blucher, and he no longer doubted that he would have time to finish one victory before he should commence another. The smoke, however, approached, the cannonading increased, and officers riding at full speed towards head-quarters, undeceived him in spite of himself. Grouchy's division existed only in his imagination it had received no order, and no intelligence was received from the army of this marshal; the plains and hills in front of, Wavres were silent and vacant. "Grouchy! Grouchy!" Napoleon exclaimed every instant; "where is he? What is he doing? Send more officers after him, hasten his march, he must be within reach of us under the hills of La Chapelle, or towards the Dyle."

His only reply was the appearance of the long dark columns of the Prussians and their flags, which he refused to recognise, although the black eagle was visible to the eyes of his staff. These columns, at least 30,000 strong, were already debouching and descending from the defiles of St. Lambert, driving back before them the 3,000 French light cavalry, and marching rapidly against the troops of Count Lobau, which covered the right of Planchenoit. At the sight of this the Emperor recalled the order for a general attack which he had already given. He abandoned Ney to himself with the left, the centre, and the reserve already engaged, keeping Lobau to cover his field of battle against the Prussians, continually increasing in number. It was no longer to be doubted that Grouchy had been outstripped. Bulow, and very soon Blucher also, who was perceived in the distance, would arrive in full force in the middle of the scene, and effect the catastrophe by the annihilation of Lobau, if Grouchy should not arrive as promptly as themselves But he still flattered

himself that this general was following, or keeping up with the Prussian army; and every cannon shot that he heard behind Planchenoit went to his heart, believing it to proceed from his right wing.

Meanwhile Lobau, stationed between Planchenoit and Bulow, fought the Prussian army with intrepid assurance, and stopped it for nearly an hour, under the walls of the church and in the church yard of Planchenoit; but while Lobau and the sixth corps were devoting themselves to check this irruption of a new army, the Prussians were constantly increasing; and throwing themselves with a formidable artillery upon the heights more in advance at Planchenoit, towards the centre of the French army, they cannonaded from thence the school-house and even the building, whence the Emperor governed with his eye the struggle of the three armies. The balls flew over his head and struck the trees and the walls around his head quarters The peril of the moment withdrawing his attention from Ney's assault, Napoleon suspended the movement already begun towards Mont-Saint-Jean, by his young guard, and directed it at the utmost speed to the support of Count Lobau Ney, in his impatience, turned round and saw his reinforcements take another direction; he stopped, he reflected, he hesitated, and he saw that the victory or defeat of the army thenceforward depended upon him alone. Relying, in the extremity of the moment, on the inexhaustible courage of his own soul, to save all by bringing matters to an immediate issue, he sent order upon order, to hasten to him all the reserves which he saw in position on his left, or in rear of his columns; the drums beat the charge on every point, and a torrent of troops poured itself forward on Mont-Saint-Jean.

XLIV.

The English army had scarcely time to breathe between the two assaults, and Wellington, immovable on his wounded horse, was looking with an intrepid despair of victory upon this outburst of the French army towards himself alone, when Bulow's cannon resounding suddenly from under the hills of

Planchenoit, which still hid the Prussians from him, brought him at length the assistance he had so long and so anxiously expected. "Forward my lads!" he exclaimed, waving his sword to his troops; "we have stood long enough to be attacked, it is now our turn!" An English column immediately rushed forward, and darting upon the left of Ney's columns, advanced to storm La Haie Sainte, and to clear afterwards the intervening space between Ney and the Emperor. La Haie Sainte, which was covered and defended by the French infantry, opened a heavy fire upon the advancing column, while Ney pushed forward the lancers and the chasseurs of his *corps d'armée* upon their flanks. These swept the English regiments, as they were returning in disorder before them, pursued them, and clearing at their heels the last ridge of the terrace, which was less inaccessible to the left, re-formed and charged the English artillery stationed on the edge of the slope, killed the gunners at their posts, pushed forward beyond the silenced batteries, and assaulted the English squares of infantry of reserve, even as far as their camp, where they fancied themselves under shelter. Ney himself rushed at the head of the cuirassiers, to support his cavalry, whose shouts of victory he heard upon the terrace. There he maintained his footing for a moment, less like a general commanding than a soldier mounting a breach; while the English, amazed, did not venture to attack and drive him down again. For a moment he indulged the hope that his boldness, his promptitude, his enthusiasm, and his success would induce the Emperor to neglect the Prussians and send him his guard. But Napoleon, who took in the whole field of battle, and who foresaw that an incomplete victory, by his second in command, would be followed by a necessary retreat, and a frustration of the heroism of his troops, murmured against the temerity of Ney. Marshal Soult participated in the views of the Emperor. "He is compromising us," he said, "as he did at Sierra; he leads us on beyond our means; and carries us forward on one side alone, whilst we have to make head against all." "This is a premature movement which may cost us dear," said Napoleon. He admired while he condemned the intrepidity of his general.

XLV.

During this short dialogue at head-quarters, Ney, who had advanced too far, was effectually driven back under the shock of Wellington's entire cavalry, who dashed down the marshal and his columns to the bottom of the slope, and even beyond the second line. Napoleon, on seeing this, and fearing that Ney's precipitate retreat would break his centre, ordered Kellermann, Milhaut, and Guyot to unite all their divisions of cuirassiers to the lancers, the dragoons, the chasseurs, and mounted grenadiers of the guard, and to support Ney in his defeat. This immense mass of horse, the most warlike and redoubtable of all Europe, the final thunderbolt of all the great French battles, to the number of 10,000 horses, charged at a gallop the English cavalry, which were deployed to receive them. But Wellington did not wait for the shock; on the approach of the French squadrons, dashing on amidst cries of "Vive l'Empereur!" the English regiments were thrown back in two masses to the right and left, unmasking sixty pieces of cannon in battery, which poured a terrible shower of grape shot upon the devoted guards. The whole of the front ranks instantly strewed the ground with the dead or mutilated bodies of men and horses; but the remainder rushed forward, silenced a second time the English artillery, and charged the squares of Wellington,—living citadels posted by him at intervals to support and cover each other. They withstood the rolling fire of these squares, penetrated to the last reserves of the English army; charged them, but could make no impression, retired and re-formed after the charge, to renew their onset upon other squares; forcing them occasionally with the bleeding chests of their horses, but more frequently rolling upon the ground under their bayonets. After every charge the English squares spread themselves out like a fan, to extend the surface of their fire, and re-formed squares again to meet with greater solidity another shock. One brigade alone resisted in this manner no less than eleven charges, contracting its square at every successive charge. Some regiments were reduced to two-thirds of their original number, but remained immovable

notwithstanding, resolved to die to the last man rather than yield their position and give up the victory. One Scotch division of 4,000 men was reduced to 400, and asked for a reinforcement.* "They may die," replied Wellington, "but they must keep their ground. Nothing but night or Blucher can now give us reinforcements!" The division obeyed and stood its ground.

The Duke of Wellington, the Prince of Orange, Lord Hill, Pozzo di Borgo, and Alava, a Spanish volunteer general, flew by turns from one regiment to another to animate them, entered the squares, received the charges, and quitted them again after their fire had been delivered, to fly to another, thus setting an example and imparting resolution to all. "Stand fast! stand to the last man, my lads!" repeated Wellington from square to square; "we must not be beaten: what would they say of us in England?" This was Nelson's word of encouragement at Trafalgar, the eye of England was upon every one of her soldiers.

He was in despair, however, at seeing his gallant companions-in-arms falling around him on every side. "Great heavens!" he exclaimed, on beholding the sun slow to disappear, and Blucher tardy to arrive, "must I then see these brave fellows cut in pieces!" Never were the French so desperately bent on victory, and never were the English so unshaken by defeat: they felt that they were now contending for the last time for the prey of the world. Modern ages have never witnessed so terrible a struggle of two nations, hand to hand, upon so narrow a spot of ground. All was blood, dead bodies of men and horses, cannons, gun-carriages, and broken arms! Ney, forgetting that he was a general, and leaving each regiment to its own instinct, fought single-handed, waving his general's hat with his left hand, his broken sword in his right, and his horse killed under him at his feet.

General Lesourd having received six sabre wounds, dismounted while his dragoons were rallying for a fresh charge,

* This is evidently an error. 400 must be meant instead of 4,000, and 40 instead of 400.—*Translator.*

had his arm amputated and the blood stanched, then mounted his horse again and charged with his squadrons On both sides they appeared to breathe only to kill each other, to strike and be stricken was to live! Generals, soldiers, even the horses themselves seemed to have taken leave of existence, and to seek as in gladiatorial games of old, to fall with the greatest glory and upon the body of the foe

The Prince of Orange worthy on that day of Wellington, and of the throne he was contending for was surrounded, amidst a small body of followers by a whole squadron of French cuirassiers who were on the point of cutting him down The 7th Belgian battalion seeing his danger, charged the cuirassiers with the bayonet broke them, penetrated and delivered their hereditary prince who taking his decoration from his breast threw it into the midst of the battalion exclaiming 'For all my brave fellows! You have all won glory and saved my throne! A cry of Long live the Prince of Orange! Long live the king of our children! arose from the liberating battalion

XLVI

But the 10,000 French horse were still riding over and ravaging this field of battle drenched with water and blood and kneaded like one vast mass of red clay under the feet of 20 000 horses of both armies Wellington having quitted the melée for an instant, returned to his post under the oak, having now only three aides de camp at his side, out of seventeen, the remainder being either killed or wounded With his telescope to his eye he contemplated for a few moments this tempest of charges and saw that the musket balls of his squares were deadened against the cuirasses of the French cavalry He passed from rank to rank of his gallant Scotch the order to allow themselves to be charged without firing, to pierce the horses chests with the points of their bayonets to slip under the feet of the animals and rip up their bellies, with the short broadsword worn by these children of the north The Scotch obeyed, and, themselves on foot charged the French cavalry This melée lasted for three whole hours, with a loss

of from 12,000 to 15,000 men of both nations, without yielding a foot of ground on either side. The dead and the wounded were heaped upon the mud, while the survivors filled up the spaces by closing to each other, at the almost inaudible voices of their officers. Ney, re-mounted on the horse of one of his troopers, was carried backwards and forwards by the ebb and flow of this sanguinary tide; sometimes as far as the English reserves, sometimes to the ridge of the terrace. The slightest reinforcement of fresh troops would have given him the victory and the road to Brussels. One of his batteries was already sweeping it, and sending its balls into the midst of the column of fugitives. But nothing could shake those brigades, which incessantly renewed, with the imperturbable phlegm of the north, the manœuvre of deploying to extend their fire, on the retiring of the French squadrons, and re-forming square on their approach in a fresh charge.

XLVII.

Napoleon himself, whether he thought at the moment that Ney had gained the victory, and that the certainty of vanquishing afforded him impartiality enough to praise an enemy; or whether the professional man was stronger in him just then than the partisan, was admiring from his position, through the volumes of smoke, the sinister beauty of this spectacle, the solidity, the evolutions, and the precision of firing and manœuvring of the English. "What brave troops!" he exclaimed, with the accent of a generous enthusiasm and manly pity to Marshal Soult, standing by his side, on the rising ground whence these two warriors were contemplating Mont-Saint-Jean: "What brave troops! and with what constancy and vigour they work. The English fight well, it must be confessed, we have taught them the way. They are worthy of us; but they must very soon retire!" "The French cavalry surrounded us, as if it had been our own!" wrote Wellington himself, some days after, in his account of the battle. But in spite of the headlong bravery of Ney, of Kellermann, of Guyot, of Milnaut, of Lesourd, who commanded that cavalry, no spirit of

unity governed these scattered charges, and gave to these solid regiments the mass, the weight, the perseverance, and irresistible impulse of men and horses, by which a great cavalry officer formerly rendered this united arm of the service the final arbiter of battles Murat was needed to lead these squadrons, his eye, his soul, and his sabre failed the Emperor in his utmost need

He was at this moment at Toulon, obscure, hidden, repentant weeping for his fault, vainly imploring for the field of battle to wash it out with his blood, and his heart was gnawed with grief that these regiments were about to charge and to die without him! All military men agree that the absence of Murat was the fortune of Wellington in those last charges of cavalry at Mont Saint Jean and Napoleon himself although embittered and discontented with this master of final defeats, could not help repeating frequently "Ah! if Murat was there!

XLVIII.

The absence of this hero the invincible solidity of the English, the stoical constancy of the Scotch, the successive scattering of the French charges, striking everywhere and penetrating nowhere, the weariness of men and horses, after galloping and struggling for three hours, on broken and slippery ground, which exhausted the strength of the animals under a summer sun, the heat of which was doubled by the flame of the innumerable discharges and the breathing of men and beasts, finally Wellington's reserved batteries, re conquered by the English artillerymen after the retreat of the French squadrons, and pouring showers of grape upon them, had at length separated the combatants, and drove Ney and his army back once more upon the ridge of the terrace, which he had vainly clambered up

At this aspect of affairs Napoleon no longer hesitated, and Ney's danger even carried himself into the battle He summoned General Petit with the light infantry of his guard, confiding to him the care of covering his right towards Planchenoit, and being for a while tranquil on this point, he formed a column

of attack of the foot grenadiers of his guard, an invincible column, which he pushed forward to support his cavalry, and maintain it upon the plateau against the reiterated charges of Wellington.

These 6,000 grenadiers advanced with shouldered arms amidst cries of "Vive l'Empereur!" Wellington contemplated them with a degree of alarm springing from the prestige of this corps, immortalised upon so many battle fields. He felt that he must act against soldiers like these not as with men, but as with an element. He awaited them, therefore, with a battery of forty pieces of cannon, with lighted matches. As they ascended and approached, the battery fired a volley point blank into the invading mass, which as the smoke arose was seen to waver for a moment, then to close up as solid as before, and to advance as silent and as compact as ever; still with shouldered arms, without firing, and without hastening, or slackening their pace. On a second discharge the same oscillation took place, the same closing up, and the same silence; only that the immense battalion was observed to press upon its centre, like some enormous reptile concentrating its folds when its head has been touched by the steel. On the third discharge the English gazing down from the ridge on which they were stationed, saw the column reduced to an immovable block of men, decimated by these three discharges of grape shot: two of the battalions were struck down upon the slopes, with their still loaded muskets beside them; the other two hesitated, reflected, and at length recoiled before this rock of living flame, to go and seek another means of access to these impregnable heights. But Wellington covering his whole army with 200 pieces of cannon, awaited them everywhere behind the same rampart of bronze.

XLIX.

Napoleon turned pale, doubted at length of victory, felt when too late the necessity of entirely conquering on one point, if he did not desire to be himself conquered a moment after upon every point. "My horse!" he exclaimed, throw

ing one last glance towards the Prussians, held in abeyance by D'Erlon. His horse was brought, a Persian steed, white as a swan, which he preferred riding in action, because his colour made him known at a distance to his troops, and because he stood fire so admirably. I have seen him, surviving his master many years; always proud, haughty, gentle, and raising his head at the name of Waterloo, as if he remembered his glory!

Napoleon mounted and galloped off, surrounded by his staff, and followed at a distance by an escort of some squadrons of his guard. He proceeded towards the left of his line, where his brother Jerome, Guilleminot, and General Reille were massed around La Haie Sainte and the castle of Hougoumont. Ney was already beginning to fall back, and was descending in confusion from the ridges before the artillery and the rallied cavalry of Wellington. It was high time.

The Emperor passed along the front of all the battalions and squadrons that remained to him, in the centre and left of the plain. He animated them, and pointed out to them with his hand the smoke of Mont-Saint-Jean. An entirely new army, the remains of his artillery, of his cavalry, and of his guard, was formed at the voices of his generals. When formed, he darted forward himself, sword in hand, to the first ranks of the leading column of his guard, and with a motion of his hand sending away to the right and left the generals and officers who wished to cover him: "All to the rear!" he cried, as he proceeded the very first to storm the steepest part of the acclivity, and the most destructive portion of the ridge. A gloomy silence environed him, for all felt that he went to meet his doom, whether for victory or death. His features, ever calm, appeared, however, to concentrate in their immobility, and in their silence, that gravity, the only expression of ardour allowable in command. Every one was silent behind him, and he was left to his thoughts; for it was felt that he was pitting himself against destiny. He marched thus for a few moments, within range of the 200 pieces of cannon of the English army, which, however, were yet silent that they might not throw away their fire; then turning to-

wards his army, and ranging himself a little on the left, on the reverse of a hillock which sheltered him from the balls: "Forward! forward!" he cried, animating his battalions with eye, voice, and gesture, as they passed on before him; while, with desperate enthusiasm, generals, officers, and soldiers cried out in turn, "Vive l'Empereur!" as they rushed forward at full gallop, and exposed to the thundering fire of the batteries.

Ney, his face blackened with powder, his clothes soiled and torn in the action, and an expression of joy and victory in his looks, hastened to meet the guard, and leading them on to his own troops, once more re-formed, he directed in person this general attack upon the English line. Wellington's 200 pieces of cannon, and the 300 pieces of the French army, which answered them from the highest elevations of La Belle Alliance, covered the army of Ney and of Napoleon with a canopy of balls, while they stormed the terrace under this tremendous fire. Just then an officer galloped up to announce to the Emperor that the Belgians and Germans who formed Wellington's left, towards St. Lambert, were falling back in disorder towards Mont Saint-Jean, followed by a cloud of smoke.

"'Tis Grouchy! 'tis Grouchy!" cried the Emperor. "At last he's here, and we have won the victory! Fly," he said to Labédoyère, who was on horseback by his side; "fly and announce this joyful news to the marshal and his troops; it will reanimate their courage." Labédoyère galloped from battalion to battalion to where Ney stood, spreading everywhere the news of Grouchy's approach. "Vive l'Empereur!" replied the soldiers; "the day is ours!" as with fresh ardour they rushed up the acclivity amidst a storm of fire.

The Emperor's joy, however, was short and deceitful; the sport of fortune, which flattered him to the last moment with the mirage of victory to make his defeat more bitter and more complete. It was not Grouchy, but Blucher himself who was at length debouching from the defiles of St. Lambert. Grouchy had vainly endeavoured to engage him by an attack on his rear-guard on the side of Wavres. The old warrior, more daring than Grouchy, and through that boldness which is the genius of desperate cases, more fortunate, having heard the

cannon of Waterloo, exclaimed: "My place is where Napoleon fights: victory or defeat can only be where he is victorious or defeated. There we must go without troubling ourselves about an unimportant combat with his lieutenant." He accordingly marched after Bulow. Night fell, and the Germans and Belgians thrown forward towards Papelotte by Wellington, still wore the French uniforms of 1813, Blucher's advance-guard, deceived by these colours, had fired, in their confusion, upon this lost wing of the English army, thinking they were actually engaged with the French These troops, thus taken by surprise, fell back under the unexpected assault. This occasioned the error and the joy of Napoleon. It was soon to give place to despair.

L.

Meanwhile the confidence communicated to the marshal by the voice of Labédoyere, gave an invincible impetuosity to the assault of this third and last army. The artillery and the extended lines of the English infantry exhausted their fire in vain on the advancing squares and columns of the French; whose regiments, though decimated, rushed forward upon the cannon and the bayonets of the enemy. A storm of grape shot awaited and tore them up on their approach; and a second time Ney's horse, struck by a bullet in the flank, fell dead under his rider The marshal arose, and bravely advancing on foot, with his drawn sabre in his hand, led on his infantry to the attack, in which General Michel of the Imperial Guard was killed, and General Friant wounded. The two armies, for a while separated by the heaps of slain, assaulted each other again, hand to hand; amidst the smoke of incessant discharges the mêlée was so thick, so confused, and so furious, that neither the eye nor the voice of the generals could any longer discern or command the respective movements. It rained death around Wellington. His surviving companions of the battle, Vincent, Alava, and Hill, thought all was lost; but he alone still continued to hope. "Have you any orders to give?" asked the chief of his staff, with an anxious voice, which seemed to hint at the prudence of a retreat "None," replied the general.

"But you may be killed," said the other, "and your Grace may wish to communicate your thoughts to the next in command." "My thoughts!" replied the Duke; "I have no other than to stand my ground here to the last man!"

While Wellington was thus giving utterance to the testament of his thoughts on this field of carnage, General Friant, rising up from among the wounded, approached the Emperor, still sheltered by the rising ground, and told him that everything was triumphant on the summit of the ridge, and that the advance of the old guard was only necessary to finish all. This old guard, formed in column, flanked by battalions in square on the right and left, with a brigade as a rear guard, was immediately formed, and marched slowly up the acclivity, followed by its artillery, to give a finishing stroke to the battle. These veteran soldiers, as confident in themselves as in their general, calm, grave, collected, ferocious in visage, silent as discipline, debouched in succession before the rising ground, which gave shelter to their Emperor and his brother Jerome, his aides-de-camp Drouot, Bernard, Labedoyère, Bertrand, his grand marshal of the palace, and the principal officers of his military court. Napoleon encouraged them with a smile and a gesture, to which they replied by waving their fur caps, brandishing their arms, and shouting, "Vive l'Empereur!"

They were, however, astonished that in the very extremity and crisis of such a battle, Napoleon remained so far from the scene of action, sheltered from that death which so many thousand men were braving for him. They expected to see him quit his shelter at a gallop, and throw himself into the midst of them as on former great occasions. The wounded by hundreds, sprinkling the hills with their blood, were constantly passing before him from the scene of carnage. The clash of the contending battalions was heard above his head His brother Jerome blushing at his own safe position while so many lives were sacrificed for him, murmured in a low voice against this immobility of the Emperor. "Why does he delay in showing himself?" he said to Labédoyère: "Will he ever have a nobler opportunity of conquering or dying?" Soon after being himself sent by the Emperor at the head of a

column, Jerome braved fire and death, with the devoted gallantry of a simple grenadier. Napoleon, who as yet thought nothing was lost, did not wish, and with reason, to stake, at the conclusion of a victory, France, the Empire, and himself against a chance bullet. Others say that both his mind and body, weakened by care and anxiety, kept him towards the end of this eventful day in a state of depression and insensibility, which led him passively to await his destiny from events, rather than ensure it by his energy. But his soldiers were making supernatural efforts, to wrest this destiny from the fate of the battle.

The old guard, shattered in vain by the English artillery clambered to the crest of the ridge of Mont-Saint Jean. All gave way before them. The Prince of Orange, while rallying his troops, was struck by a bullet in the shoulder. The English squares received him in their flank, and opened, as in the morning, to give passage to a volley of grape shot from the artillery within The old guard rolled back in its turn at the unexpected discharge, and whole companies, shattered by it, detached themselves from the rest and fled in confusion past the spot where the Emperor was sheltered. Some cries of despair and of treason were uttered by the discomfited group. Napoleon, no longer able to withstand this dreadful spectacle, urged his charger forward three times to go himself and support, or lead on again his old guard; while Bertrand and Drouot, his friends, as often seized his bridle, and pushed him back into shelter from the balls. "What are you going to do, Sire?" said these brave officers to him. "Recollect that the salvation of France and of the army is in you alone. If you perish here all must perish with you!" The Emperor yielded, and passively resumed his post, whence he could neither see nor be seen till the termination of the struggle.

He was acquainted with, but feigned ignorance of the arrival of Blucher on his right flank. He wished, and with reason, to give time to the army engaged on the heights, to conquer there before he should recall it against another enemy. But the generals who were fighting with such sterile enthusiasm upon the heights had been informed as soon as himself of the

arrival of the Prussians. The intelligence soon spread amongst the soldiers, already fatigued with a nine hours' struggle, and disheartened by a resistance such as they had never before met with in the whole course of their previous campaigns. Uncheered by the presence of their Emperor, seeing the day decline, and perceiving no other reward for their victory over the English than fresh armies to pass through or to conquer behind them during the night, they anxiously expected every instant to be recalled by Napoleon, while they felt the ardour of the English redoubled by the certainty of being soon reinforced by the Prussians. The reserve of the English Life Guards, until then held back as a last resource by Wellington, charged with all the energy and vigour of an army which has recruited its powers under the united influence of hope and repose. Wellington himself, mounting his eighth horse, charged sword in hand, like a simple soldier, in the midst of his most gallant troops. Eleven out of twenty-two of his generals who commanded in the morning under him were dead, and lying under their military cloaks by the roadside of Brussels. The French troops now looked at and questioned each other in dismay, exclaiming as they turned towards the side where they had left the Emperor: "What is he waiting for? What does the man want? Is his genius totally eclipsed? Has he entirely lost his head?" When an army has reached a point like this, nothing but the person, the voice, and the heroism of its chief can restore its confidence. Murmuring under fire is the certain presage of defeat. Napoleon did not appear

LI.

Wellington reappeared at the head of the 42nd light infantry and 95th Rifles,* and charging the chasseurs of the Imperial Guard in flank, he broke and pursued them, putting them to the sword as they fled. This irresistible charge of two fresh regiments upon a broken and dispersed body of troops was the

* This was the critical moment when the words, "Up Guards, and at them!" were uttered, and followed by the overwhelming charge of the English Guards.—*Translator.*

signal of general disorder throughout the French line. The English army gave three cheers, advanced in five columns, with its artillery upon Ney's army, which was flying in fragments down the heights to its former position. At the same time the English cavalry being pushed forward in a mass upon the French line, scarcely yet re-formed, broke through it, and dashed forward to overwhelm, under the weight of their impetus, the French cavalry, still intact, stationed on the left of the English line to watch the Prussians. Blucher was then advancing tumultuously, and driving back, from position to position, the army of D'Erlon to Waterloo, and threatening even to cut off the retreat of Ney and the Imperial Guard. The troops were immediately seized with the instinct of defeat, and a cry of "*Sauve qui peut*," raised by some panic-stricken wretches, made the soldiers believe they were betrayed. They fled immediately in all directions, and rushed forward in confused masses to regain the encampment of the morning. The voices of their officers, the reproaches of their generals, the sight even of their Emperor, before whom they passed in their flight, could not restrain them. The heights of Mont-Saint-Jean were covered with their scattered remains.

Napoleon saw that army which a few hours before was his only hope, now returning in broken fragments, and exclaimed, "All is lost!" For a moment he contemplated the disastrous scene, turned pale, stammered, and shed some tears, the first he had ever shed upon a field of battle. At length he spurred his horse and galloped forward to try and rally his troops, The current, deaf to his voice, swept him off with it, whilst Wellington's cannon drowned his words. The balls from Mont-Saint-Jean, the English cavalry, and Blucher's artillery, which was already playing upon the road, drove forward these waves of human beings like an uncontrollable torrent; night fell and shielded Napoleon from the eyes and the reproaches of his soldiers.

The Prussians soon began to ascend even the heights of Planchenoit, which in the morning were in rear of the French army. Upon this the corps, hitherto unbroken, finding their retreat cut off, abandoned their colours to seek for personal

safety in flight. Nobody commanded, and no one obeyed. Soult himself, abandoned by the army, abandoned it in his turn to look after his own safety. The route to the Sambre was about to be intercepted by Blucher. Every one saw this; and the instinct of individual safety, the only feeling of an army which, on losing its cohesion, seems to have lost everything, drove every one pell-mell towards that river.

Some bodies of the Imperial Guard still attempted a short and desperate resistance. The Prussian artillery broke their last squares in the plain, while Wellington's cavalry, rushing down upon them from the heights, sabred the scattered bands in all directions. Whole regiments flung away their arms and their knapsacks; the artillerymen cut the traces of their horses, and left their pieces in the ravines, and the soldiers of the waggon-trains abandoned their vehicles, or made use of them to fly across the fields towards Charleroi. One regiment alone of the old guard, the 1st, commanded by General Cambronne, one of the commandants of the grenadiers of the Emperor's guard at the Isle of Elba, still covered the flight of the army as a gallant rear-guard, against the English cavalry. Their file firing, retarded for a while two armies weary of fighting after a victory. The Prussians and the English pressed upon these two battalions on three sides, admiring and pitying their useless sacrifice. They suspended the fire of their light artillery, and the charges of their squadrons upon this block of heroes, and sent flags of truce to General Cambronne to propose to him to lay down his arms. The general, who had already received six sabre wounds in the retreat replied by one of those trivialities of sublime meaning, and cynic expression,* well understood by the soldier, and which writers subsequently transform into phrases of historical display: puerile legends when heroism is in the deed and not in the word. General Cambronne and his regiment refused all capitulation and all pity from the enemy. He allowed their solid squares to be destroyed by the cannon. They thus for a moment retarded the pursuit, and gave time to the Emperor to make a passage for himself through the crowd towards the head of the army

* "The Guard dies but never surrenders."—*Translator.*

LII.

The shades of night concealed him and his staff from the eyes of the English and the Prussians, so close to him. On arriving by the dreadfully encumbered road on a line with the last squares of his guard, Napoleon was tempted to bury himself with Cambronne in this last furrow of the field of battle He turned his horse's head towards this handful of brave men, followed by Soult, Flahaut, Labédoyère, Bertrand, Drouot, and Gourgaud, who had rejoined him and opened for him, sword in hand, a difficult passage through the dense mass of fugitives The square deployed before him, and saluted him once more with the last and melancholy cry of "Vive l'Empereur!" Sublime farewell of the army, answering in the face of death to the farewell of Fontainebleau

Silent and sorrowful, the Emperor seemed resigned, and determined to await there the ball which he had vainly predicted at Arcis sur Aube, and which alone could absolve and illustrate his last fault against his country The dense mass of fugitives issuing from all the hills and all the gorges of Waterloo towards this hollow, and interposed at this point between the English cavalry and the guard, embarrassed the enemy Wellington's regiments of heavy cavalry could not penetrate it, but drove on heavily before them these unarmed masses, like a flock of sheep which allow themselves to be crushed by the feet of the horses, for want of space to disperse themselves

The Emperor observed before him some pieces of French artillery, abandoned and overturned by the road-side. "Raise and fire these pieces," said he to Gourgaud; and Gourgaud obeyed. Assisted by the grenadiers of the guard he discharged some of them on the English cavalry. These were the last cannon shots fired in the battle. One of the balls carried off the leg of the Earl of Uxbridge, who commanded these regiments, and up to that period had escaped being wounded, in the midst of a carnage of twelve hours He fell, the twelfth general of the English army struck down in the course of

the day. His fall suspended the pursuit for a moment. His cavalry, burning to avenge him, soon sprang forward to the charge.

The Emperor ordered the guard to re-form square and spurred his horse to throw himself into the midst of it. Soult, with more coolness, seized the bridle and held him back, exclaiming, "Ah! Sire, is not the enemy already fortunate enough?" Bertrand, Drouot, Flahaut, and Labédoyère, conjured Napoleon not to give up in his person the army and France itself to death or captivity. He yielded and renounced the hero's death for the chances of a forlorn hope with his last battalions. His tomb was there, said Jerome. For him to live was nothing more than a forfeiture of everything Men who die at the summit even of their reverses, leave behind them a pity which doubles their glory. Three times he had shown that he was not one of these—at Moscow, at Fontainebleau, and at Waterloo. He persisted in living and hoping when it was glory to despair. St. Helena awaited him with its languors and its paltry vexations, to punish him for having evaded death.

Cambronne fell, with all the soldiers of his regiment, under the grape-shot and the sabres of the enemy, to give a few minutes more freedom to the flight of Napoleon and immortality to the Imperial Guard. The English cavalry could only pass over the bodies of dead and wounded. The following day the peasant raised nothing but mutilated corpses from this field of death. It was the Thermopylæ of the guard.

LIII.

The moon, fatal to the fugitives, arose to illumine the pursuit: the two armies, English and Prussian, mingled together at the point where Cambronne alone had retarded their junction, at the foot of the heights of La Belle Alliance. Wellington and Blucher, the one a victor exhausted by thirteen hours of blood and fire, the other burning to complete the victory, towards which he had only lent a distant aid, met together on the very spot where Napoleon had slept the night before, and pitched his tent on the plateau of Rossomme. The two generals

dismounted and embraced, each modestly awarding the other the glory of the day. It belongs, however, to Wellington, who had dared all, sustained all, and accomplished all, in this terrible battle. Blucher had done nothing but make his appearance, and even that late in the day. But his presence rendered all hope of retreat for Napoleon impossible. Wellington had the victory, and Blucher the pursuit. This he undertook. "My brave fellows," said the English general to him, "are exhausted with blood, violence, and fatigue; they have been fighting for thirteen hours, and I should wish to spare them a little. They are my children, and have wrought miracles!" At these words Blucher took the general's hands, and pressing them in his own, bedewed them with tears of admiration, answering to him for the night, and taking upon himself the responsibility of the pursuit. He accordingly summoned all his commandants of corps, and ordered them to push forward even to the last man and last horse of his army against France. "My children!" he cried, mounting his horse as his regiments defiled before him, "let this night finish the enemy, that the sun in rising to-morrow may only show us the road open to Paris!"

Wellington then descended from the plateau, halted his army, and made them give three cheers for the victory. 15,000 dead, 10,000 prisoners, and 100 pieces of cannon were already the spoils of Wellington at Waterloo: Blucher hastened to complete the rest. Napoleon did not know how to conquer by halves, neither did he know how to save anything in defeat. We weep while we describe such disasters; but history which lies only adds shame to misfortune. France has no occasion to emblazon her glory by falsehood. One man had lost all. The army, destroyed by his imprudence, was flying amidst the shades of night, vainly inquiring if he were dead or a prisoner.

LIV

Under the cannon of the Prussians, and the sabres of Blucher's light cavalry, an immense current of disbanded soldiers, of generals without corps, officers without regiments, of horses without riders, of baggage, camp equipage, and broken

shells, swept everything along, and was itself irresistibly impelled, upon the road and across the fields which, in two leagues of hills and plains, separate Waterloo from Jemappe Napoleon, under the concealment of the night, followed this torrent himself, and endeavoured to get before it. Recognised from time to time by the white colour of his charger, the grey coat he wore, and the rich uniforms of his weak escort of general officers, the soldiers remarked to one another, in a low voice · "'Tis he! There is the Emperor! He is not dead then!" and they respected by their silence the grief of his soul, and the humiliation of his great reverses.

A Belgian peasant, who served as guide to Napoleon and his staff, engulfed at once the whole of the army by leading them into the narrow defile of a single bridge to cross the Dyle, while several other passages in the immediate neighbourhood might have given them all an easy access to the other side. The Prussians, who were pressing close upon their rear, opened a heavy fire on them, as they were crossing this bridge, and possessed themselves of sixty pieces of cannon, with which the fugitives attempted to defend it. The French general, Duhesme, of the rear-guard, fell there under the sabre of a Brunswick hussar. "Our Duke was killed yesterday fighting against thee," said the hussar to Duhesme, as he plunged his sword into his breast; "and thy blood shall pay for his."

The Emperor himself had much difficulty in crossing this bridge with his suite. All his camp equipage and his carriage, which contained his sword and military hat, fell into the hands of General Ziethen, and became the trophies of Blucher. Many officers and soldiers, preferring death to captivity, shot each other, to escape by a voluntary destruction the shame of such a defeat. Nine times during this night, the remains of the army attempted to resist, and to establish their bivouacs at points easily defended; but as often did the Prussians, animated by Blucher, storm these entrenchments, and disperse these masses, without chiefs, and almost without arms. General Pelet, and some other general officers alone, with a few hundred brave grenadiers, covered the road against the charges of the cavalry; but the night was neither dark enough nor long

enough, to preserve the unfortunate fugitives from death. Of 120,000 men who had passed the Sambre four days before, scarcely 40,000 re-crossed it before the day after the battle

Napoleon at length disengaged, after crossing the bridge of Jemappe, from the crowds who retarded his speed, passed without recognition through Charleroi, already encumbered with fugitives and wounded men. He did not stop till he had got a league farther on, beyond a bridge over the Sambre, where he dismounted, and for the first time since morning, took some nourishment. While he was thus recruiting his exhausted strength, he deliberated for a moment with his officers on the course that remained for him to pursue. To continue with the army, collect its scattered remains, recall Grouchy, raise Paris and the north behind him, invoke the patriotism of the people, even to despair, resist on all points, fall back slowly upon his capital, while concentrating there the means of defence, by which he might dispute the heart of the Empire, or enforce a treaty from the coalition; such was the course suggested by the heroism of the soldier, and energetically advised by Flahaut and Labédoyère. On the other hand, to abandon his army to its fate, outstrip the news of his defeat at Paris, surprise the assembly of representatives, astonish and forestal the factions so ready to spring up, dissolve the Chamber, seize upon a new dictatorship, contend for the Empire while giving up the soil, and occupy himself with his reign and not with the frontiers; such was the instinct which hurried him on towards Paris, as after Moscow, as after Leipsic, and as after Soissons and Rheims in 1814. No consideration, no prediction of his young officers, could prevail in this hasty counsel over his stubborn nature. He saw only the throne, instead of looking at the salvation of the national independence, and of his army. The Prussians already in sight on the other side of the bridge, were scarcely retarded for a moment by Generals Petit and Pelet, of Morvan, at the head of two battalions of all arms, covering the person of their Emperor. He got into a dilapidated post-chaise, as at Arcis-sur-Aube, concealed by leathern curtains from the eyes of the soldiers who covered the road, and of the peasants who were

contemplating the rout of the army, while the cannon of Blucher was thundering in his rear, as the Prussians were forcing the bridge over the Sambre, and profaning the territory of France. The horses, less rapid than his thoughts, bore him at a gallop towards Paris, by Philippeville.

LV

Such was the battle of Waterloo, lost, not by the army, which was never more indefatigable, more devoted, and more brave, but by the commission of four faults: the tardiness of Ney on the evening of the 16th in occupying Quatre-Bras the indecision of Grouchy in not marching towards the cannon of the battle, and neglecting Wavres; the too great distance left by Napoleon between his army and his right wing commanded by Grouchy; finally, and above all, the loss of seven hours of daylight by Napoleon, on the morning of the 18th, in front of Wellington,—fatal hours, which gave time to the Prussians to arrive on the field of battle, and to the French army a second enemy upon its flanks, before it had vanquished the first Of these four errors two must be ascribed to Napoleon's generals, and two to himself,—none to the troops Neither his genius nor his resolution are recognised in separating himself from one-third of his army, by an immense and unknown space on his right, without even verbal communication with this wing; nor when he hesitated till eleven o'clock in the forenoon, before he advanced to storm Mont-Saint-Jean, and to deprive Wellington of the hope of being joined by the Prussians, already in sight on the horizon, but still three hours' march from the field of battle He left Ney, half a victor upon the reverse of Mont-Saint-Jean, to wait for three hours the mass of the army and the Imperial Guard, instead of profiting by the breach opened by the marshal in the English army, to hurl upon it his centre and his reserve, and to sweep Wellington, scarcely resisting, from the field, before Blucher should be in a position to prevent the defeat of the English. Finally, his decisive impulse amidst the fire of battle could not be recognised in his ten hours' immobility

on the plateau of Rossomme, and in his passive inertness behind the hillock at Mont-Saint-Jean, whilst his army was totally sacrificing itself by mounting to the breach opened by Ney, and waiting for nothing but the presence and example of its Emperor to rise above itself and superior to destiny. One of these faults alone was sufficient to ruin an ordinary army, but all combined destroyed that of France.

Let us add, in order to be just, that Wellington and his army equalled by their intrepidity the first generals and the best soldiers of France. The English general possessed the true genius adapted for desperate struggles—the determination not to be conquered. His troops possessed the real genius of defence—passive obedience unto death. The Scotch regiments covered, without yielding an inch, the spot on which they were ordered to die

Whence arose those weaknesses in the military genius of Napoleon the day on which the thread of his destiny was cut by that sword which had conquered the world? Why was he no longer the man of Marengo and Austerlitz? It was that we draw in fear and trembling our final lot from the urn of destiny; it was that he felt there was behind him a country violated, three months before, by his ambition to reign; a country to which he owed victory as a reparation, and before which he trembled to reappear vanquished. It was that he was on the brink of a precipice, and that his soul, divided between his part of general and his part of sovereign, made him fail at the same time in both one and the other.

"It was written," he said at a later period, when recurring with bitterness to his fall. Yes, it was written in his error! Yes, the fall was written in the abyss that he had himself dug, by exciting the army against the country, and having nothing to stake against Europe and against France at the same time but this sole army which he trembled to lose, and which he lost in not daring to risk it in the footsteps of Ney. He never fought during the whole of this battle but with one quarter, one third, or one half of his forces; waiting, suspending, pushing forward and at the same time withholding his columns; sending one by one his wings, his advance guards,

his centre, his cavalry, his reserves, and finally his Imperial Guard, as so many isolated waves, to throw themselves upon, to break and exhaust themselves, and melt away against the rock of fire of Mont-Saint-Jean, which their united forces would have overwhelmed, without any doubt, before the arrival of Blucher, if he had begun the battle with the day, and given to his attack the weight of his whole army, the lightning of his *coup d'œil*, and the impulse of his presence. He was vanquished without being able to explain to himself the cause of his defeat, and therefore ascribed it to treason. He was only betrayed by his own genius. Twenty thousand dead bodies of his generals, his officers, and his soldiers attested their fidelity unto death. These brave fellows did not fail the man, the man failed them. Waterloo remains in history not as a failure of the French army, but as a failure of its chief. The army was sacrificed, not vanquished. Thus, unlike all other historical days which exalt or diminish the grandeur of a people, the defeat of Waterloo counts in the annals of the nation's glory as equal to a triumph. Europe lost none of its terror at soldiers who knew thus how to die, and an army that buried itself in its own blood. For the world, that day was a day of terror at the French name; for France, a day of grief not of humiliation; for Napoleon alone, it was a battle foolishly hazarded, and feebly conducted; a melée left to itself, a fortune groped for in a deluge of blood, a renown eclipsed, a glory extinguished, a country delivered over, an empire lost. Such was Waterloo! Posterity will not call France to account for it, but Napoleon.

LVI

This defeat left nothing undecided in future events; for victory had given judgment. The war began and ended in a single battle: for behind Napoleon there was no longer an army, and behind the wreck of this army, flying towards France, there was no longer a people. It was not the people who had recalled Napoleon, and who had made his cause theirs; it was Napoleon who had seduced the army with the spell of his glory, and had made it the stake of his second

fortune. This army being destroyed, the nation afflicted, devastated, weakened, but immovable, remained, so to speak, at once the spectator and the prey of the conqueror. The war was finished with the cause of the man in whose interest it had been commenced. The nation had nothing more to do than to suffer its disasters, and to expiate, though innocent, the weakness it had shown in yielding to the violence of the pretorians of the Isle of Elba; and in allowing its laws, its peace, its charter, and its government, to be staked against the ambition and the glory of one man.

We therefore scarcely think it necessary to notice the impotent resistance, by which the feeble detachments of Suchet, of Lecourbe, of Rapp, and even of Grouchy, barely attempted to retard the invasion of a million of men, which the Sambre, the Rhine, and the Alps poured once more upon the north, the Vosges, Alsace, the Jura, Lyons, Burgundy, and the plains of Paris. The fate of France was decided; that of the Bourbons was not doubtful, that of Napoleon alone was still uncertain. All night he was flying towards his capital; shedding tears, regretting that he still lived, but still aspiring to reign; deafened with the noise of the cannon of Waterloo, stupified with his fall, scarcely believing it real, and revolving in his heart and in his mind, all the revolutions, all the vicissitudes, all the humiliations, all the discouragements, all the hopes, all the weaknesses, and all the windings of his fortune and his thoughts.

BOOK TWENTY-SIXTH.

Halt of Napoleon at Philippeville—Despatches to the Council of Ministers —Letter to his brother Joseph—He quits Philippeville and stops at Rocroy—Deliberation of the Emperor's staff at Rocroy—Arrival of Napoleon at Laon—Bulletin of the Battle of Waterloo—State of the public mind at Paris—Impression made on Paris by the news of the defeat—Arrival of Napoleon at Paris—The 20th June, Napoleon at the Elysée—Interview of Napoleon with Caulaincourt and with his brothers—Council of Ministers—The 21st of June—Intrigues of Fouché—Attitude of Lafayette—His speech to the Chamber of Representatives—Adoption of his propositions by the Chamber—The Emperor's resistance—The Chamber nominates a commission charged with its protection—Proposition of Sebastiani—Apprehensions of the Chamber—Concourse of people round the Elysée—Napoleon and Lucien—Irresolution of the Emperor—The Emperor's message to the Chambers—Sitting of the two Chambers—Lucien's advice to Napoleon—Depression of Napoleon—Intervention of Benjamin Constant between the Chambers and Napoleon—His interview with the Emperor at the Elysee.

I

NAPOLEON stopped a few moments at Philippeville, to issue from thence orders for rallying the troops to the generals whom he had left behind him exposed to all the chances of the rout and the pursuit. In this short halt he was rejoined by Maret, his secretary of state, and by the secretaries of his cabinet, who had escaped with difficulty from the field of battle. His carriages, his portfolios, and his imperial robes had all fallen into the hands of Blucher. He could not restrain his tears on again seeing Maret, the old witness of his prosperity and now of his distress. His ancient impassibility of features had yielded before the rapidity and the vastness of his reverse

The sovereign had disappeared, the man revealed himself, and did not blush to show himself unequal to the excess of his misfortune. This emotion did not degrade him in the eyes of Maret, of Bertrand, and of his confidential intimates. Nature in breaking out makes herself respected, even in her weaknesses. There was more real greatness in this admission of his humanity than in the hypocritical affectation of stoicism of which he had made so long a parade; and which, while it hardened the countenance, did not mask the heart, but destroyed all interest, and repulsed all pity. They were the tears of Achilles.

II.

He shut himself up for a moment with the same secretary who had gone to Elba four months before, to incite him to the conquest of the Empire, and to promise him the enthusiasm of France, and the victory over Europe. These two men did not dare to avow to each other their repentance. They persisted in the struggle though cast down and disarmed. Napoleon rapidly dictated two despatches to his confidant. The first was addressed to his council of ministers at Paris; a sort of bulletin full of reservations, of half confessions, of intentional confusion in the facts and in the results of the battle, which admitted a reverse, without as yet acknowledging despair. The language of this narrative was calculated to excite the energy of his ministers in the extreme measures destined to repair this ruin, and at the same time to intimidate Fouché, Lafayette, Manuel, and the republicans or the royalists of the Chamber, by the appearance of an army which no longer existed, and by the continuance of a campaign henceforward impossible.

The second, quite confidential to his brother Joseph, rent the veil asunder, acknowledged the disaster, poured his despair into the bosom of family confidence, called upon that domestic and fraternal devotion which the ruined man should find at the crisis of his fate in his relations, bound to his greatness or his ruin by a common interest as well as by affection. Napoleon had sufficiently aggrandized his brothers in his pros-

perity to have a right to their fellow-feeling in his disasters. There was in this letter sincerity as well as tenderness, his ordinary style had been softened by misfortune. In concluding, however, Napoleon endeavoured, either in reality, or through artifice, to deceive himself, that he might impart the courage drawn from this self-delusion to his brother.

"Perhaps all is not yet lost" he said. "I suppose that on rallying my forces I shall have 150,000 men left. The *federés* will furnish me with 100,000, and my depôts 50,000; I shall thus have 300,000 soldiers to oppose immediately to the enemy. I shall draw my artillery with private carriage horses; I shall raise 100,000 conscripts, and arm them with the muskets of royalists and cowards; I shall raise in mass, Dauphiny, the Lyonnese, Burgundy, Lorraine, and Champagne; but I must be assisted and not worried. I am going to Laon, and shall doubtless find some forces there. I have heard nothing of Grouchy. If he has not surrendered I may have in three days 50,000 combatants in hand, with which I shall occupy the enemy, and give Paris and France time to do their duty. All may be yet retrieved! Write me word what impression this horrible disaster has produced in the Chamber. I suppose the deputies will be duly impressed with their duty in these grave circumstances, and that they will unite with me in saving France! Prepare them to second me in a becoming manner!——"

Then taking the pen from his secretary's hand, he himself added at the bottom of this letter, "Courage and firmness!

"NAPOLEON."

III

This letter was the final artifice of despair; prodigal of illusion, to support a few hours longer the failure of a party, or it was the delirium of self-delusion indulging itself in its final dreams to shun the yawning abyss of realities. He spoke of 300,000 men to be assembled in a few days at Paris, of 150,000 men of his army, of 100,000 *fédéres*, of 100,000 young soldiers of an artillery equipped and drawn by private carriage horses, when he had not even a battalion to cover his halt at Charleroi.

He was ignorant whether Grouchy was still in existence, whether Ney was dead or alive, a prisoner or a fugitive on the heights of Waterloo; whether Suchet and Lecourbe were not already overwhelmed with their handful of volunteers and veterans, by the Russians and Austrians. The 100,000 *federés* of whom he had not dared to arm a single man, were nothing more than a fluctuating multitude in the suburbs of a capital, attached to the streets; powerful in riots and vociferations, but inexpert, in discipline and fighting in the field. This Paris and this France, these provinces raised in mass, had only given him, in his desperate struggle in 1814, a few hundreds of men, grouped in free corps in the mountains; and on his return from Elba nothing but some patriotic songs, and some encouraging cheers for the expulsion of the Bourbons. The Chamber of Deputies had made him tremble, even before the battle, by its attitude; what would it be after his defeat? His own ministers trafficked with him and sold him, even when still powerful: what would they do when he was vanquished? It only remained for them to deliver him up. This extreme measure of a levy *en masse* of the country, were it even possible in the actual disposition of people's minds, and in the general disaffection of their hearts, would take months and months to realise. He, a great military administrator, knew this better than any one. He had not even three days. What then could he hope for? Nothing. He deceived himself, or he deceived others. The cannon of Waterloo had deprived him of his great knowledge of men and things. Stretching out his hands on every side to seek for a support in his fall, he no longer found anything but delusions, which he endeavoured to palm upon others for realities, though he had ceased to believe in them himself. From that day forward he appeared to exist only upon the phantoms of his imagination. The palpable world seemed to have slipped through his fingers.

IV

Satisfied with having launched his thoughts and illusions before him to Paris, he threw himself, for the first time since

the night of the 17th, upon a bed and slept. During his short repose a carriage belonging to Marshal Soult, saved from the general pillage, was driven into Philippeville, which was already on the point of being assailed by the Prussians. The Emperor was awakened, and hastened out of the town, with a feeble escort of 200 infantry and cavalry of all arms, who had straggled in twos and threes into this fortified place after the battle, and united at the call of a few officers to protect the departure of their Emperor. Marshal Bertrand accompanied Napoleon in Marshal Soult's carriage. Two post chaises followed with the remainder of his court and staff; Maret, Drouet, Dejean, Corbineau, Flahaut, Labédoyere, M. de Canisy, his equerry, and M. de Bissi, his aide-de-camp.

This almost funeral cortege stopped at Rocroy to refresh the horses, and to take some nourishment themselves. These courtiers and these officers, their faces pale with emotion, their eyes reddened by tears and want of sleep, their clothes soiled with dust, gunpowder, and blood, mutually presented to each other the sinister image of the disaster they had provoked in exciting the army against their country. They talked together at a short distance from the Emperor about the course he ought to pursue in this extremity, to repair or to conquer destiny. "The Emperor," said Labédoyère, who was more responsible than any of the others for the calamitous situation of affairs, "the Emperor, without a moment's delay, should surprise Paris and the Assembly by his presence, which will make everything yield before his firmness. He must throw himself on his arrival into the midst of the national representation, frankly avow the immensity of the disaster, and offer, like Philip Augustus, to die like a soldier, leaving the crown to the most worthy! The two Chambers, won over by his ascendant, will perform with him prodigies of patriotism and energy to save the Empire!" "The Chambers!" responded the private secretary of Napoleon, who had written the despatches under his dictation; "they will offer him as a sacrifice to Europe to save themselves; you neither know the men nor the times." "Well then," said Labédoyère, somewhat irritated, "if the Chambers withdraw their support all is lost.

On the eighth day the enemy will be before Paris, and on the ninth, the Bourbons will re-enter their capital. Then what will become of freedom, and of all those who have embraced the national cause? As for me, my fate is fixed; I shall be shot the very first." The recollection of his fault made him predict his punishment.

M. de Flahaut, who had been formed in the school of M. de Talleyrand, with a cool and lucid judgment, in spite of the ardour of youth, did not indulge in any of the illusions of Labédoyère. He ventured even to oppose those of the Emperor, and dissuaded him from going to Paris He divined the characters of the men, and foresaw the weaknesses, a prelude to insults. "If the Emperor enters Paris," said M. Flahaut, "he is lost. He has only one means of saving himself and of saving France, which is to treat with the allies, and to acknowledge his defeat. "But who can say," he added, "if even the shadow of an army, the basis of any negociation whatever, remains to him, and whether the majority of his generals have not already sent, as in 1814, their submission to the Bourbons?" This young man well knew the intrepidity of these military chiefs before the cannon, and their weakness and versatility under defeat; admirable men in their profession, but men of opinions more inconstant than fortune, always yielding to the conqueror, to disgrace never.

The majority supported the advice of M. de Flahaut. Public opinion, they said, has not pardoned the Emperor for having abandoned his army in Egypt, in Spain, and at Moscow; though, on those occasions, France was not sacrificed by his absence; but what will it be after Waterloo, where he alone could attempt to cover with his body the nation which had been staked and lost by him?

The approach of a party of Prussian cavalry, advancing upon Rocroy, interrupted this discussion, and the Emperor' conference with Maret. He was requested to depart, and arrived at Laon still in a state of indecision. Some National Guards, and some peasants, gave him a reception at the gates of the town, with cries of "Vive l'Empereur!" a doleful contrast for him and his followers between enthusiasm and defeat.

The people on the route were still ignorant of the excess of their misfortune. Napoleon learned at Laon that his brother Jerome, with Marshal Soult and some generals, had rallied 3,000 men of the wrecks of the grand army. "I shall remain at Laon," said the Emperor; "the gendarmerie and the National Guard will scour the country, and rally 10,000 or 12,000 men. I shall put myself at their head, I shall wait for Grouchy, and give Paris time to reflect on its position, and to rise!" Other counsels, however, dissuaded him from this; he fluctuated with every breeze, and was no longer himself. "Well then," he said to them, "since you think it will be more prudent, I shall go to Paris; but I go there with regret, for my proper place is here. I could prompt them with my thoughts in Paris, and my brothers would do the rest."

Before his departure he retired into a separate apartment with Maret and Fleury, his secretary, and dictated for France the public and official bulletin of the battle. It was a second bulletin of Moscow, a cry of despair bursting upon France, to inspire it with the energy of despair. He summoned his officers to hear it read, and to rectify it if any circumstances had been omitted. "I could have thrown the misfortunes of this day," he said to them before he read it, "upon Marshal Ney, but I have not done so; the mischief is done, and complaint is useless." This bulletin, however sincere it was, concealed from the Parisians the capture and pillage of the equipage and carriages of the Emperor himself. M. de Flahaut was of opinion that the bulletin should disguise nothing, even this personal spoil taken by the enemy. "When you arrive in Paris," he said to Napoleon, "it will at once be seen that your equipage has been taken, and you will be accused of concealing losses much more important. Either nothing should be said, or all." The corrected bulletin was sent off, and the Emperor followed close upon it to Paris

V.

Since the departure of Napoleon for the seat of war, Paris had remained in a state of expectancy which had suspended

all political movement in the public mind, and even in the Chambers. It was felt that the fate of the nation, of freedom, of the Emperor, and of the Bourbons, was about to be decided on a field of battle. The event was not otherwise anticipated than in thought. The Chambers were fluctuating amidst insignificant sittings and aimless preliminary discussions, between the feeble desire of representative sovereignty and the habits of servility contracted by the legislative body of the Empire. M. Roy, a man of consideration in Paris, by his understanding, his firm moderation, and his opulence, accused Caulaincourt, minister of foreign affairs, of not having submitted to the Chamber of Representatives the report and the declaration of war of the Emperor's government against the allied powers. He declared that the war was illegal, and subversive of the rights of the nation. Boulay de la Meurthe, one of the men of the revolution, the most obstinately devoted to Napoleon, was indignant at this boldness, and palliated the act of Caulaincourt. Fouché, who was beginning to intrigue with the opinions of the representatives, whom he wished to attach to himself personally by acts of attention, and by the sentiment of his superiority, caused an alarming report to be read to them on the state of parties in the interior. This report threw a gloom over their minds, and seemed as if destined by the crafty minister, to counterbalance in the opinion of France the enthusiasm which a first victory expected from the camp of the Emperor might excite amongst the partisans of his cause.

In this report Fouché represented that civil war, with difficulty restrained, was ready to break out in all parts of France, even on the footsteps of the triumphant Emperor. There was no truth whatever in this picture of France. The nation was discontented, uneasy, and disaffected, but by no means conspiring. But in times when the public mind is fluctuating between all sorts of apprehensions, phantoms produce the effects of realities. Fouché wanted to strike terror into the people's imagination, in order to intimidate at once, the Emperor by the country, and the country by the Emperor. Everything breathed perfidy, concealed beneath

the appearance of zeal in the language of the minister of police. The announcement of a victory gained by the great army could scarcely counterbalance the sinister impression which these intrigues had caused in the Chambers and in Paris.

VI.

Such was the general tendency of the public mind on the 18th June. Every one thought he was walking on a soil that was mined beneath his feet. An attentive ear was lent to the slightest rumours, the most trivial report was exaggerated, everything was expected, as in those moments of silent and sinister presentiment, which precede the great catastrophes of nature. People interrogated each other on meeting in the streets, and news from the north was anxiously hoped for, when a murmur, at first vague and undecided, but soon acquiring consistency, and flying with the rapidity of thought to the Boulevards, the public places, the Exchange, to the doors and into the halls of both Chambers, first spread the news, and then furnished the details, of a great victory gained on the 16th of June by the Emperor over the Prussians at Ligny. Salvos of cannon from the Invalides, corresponding, by a strange coincidence of time, with the 400 pieces of cannon that were thundering at that moment on the French army at Waterloo, soon confirmed to the ears of the people the first triumph of their troops. They were excited; they congratulated each other; they experienced the noble pride of a military nation which learns that its name has been exalted in history, and in the face of other nations, by one more victory. But even this joy produced something gloomy and distrustful on the physiognomy of the people. Every one felt that this war of a single army against all Europe, inexhaustible alike in power and resentment, was not one of those which can be decided in a single day, and upon a single field of battle. The Bonapartists in vain tried everything to inspire the people with the intoxication with which they feigned to be animated, by extolling the star of Napoleon. The royalists continued incredulous, the citizens gloomy, the Chambers uneasy, the

people cold, the joy official. The reports communicated to the public by the government on the 19th and 20th, were vague, incomplete, and not in the tone of decisive victory. It was known that the grand army was to fight the English on the following day, and people therefore looked forward to fresh encounters and to a long campaign.

VII.

At daybreak on the 21st, a strange rumour spread through the city. All was lost! There was no longer a grand army. One single day had devoured everything! France was open to the invasion of 200,000 Prussians, English, Germans, Dutch, and Belgians, who were marching on Paris, over the corpses of 40,000 of its brave defenders, immolated on the plateaus of Waterloo, the remainder being cut off, dispersed, and fugitive The Emperor, himself a fugitive, had arrived at Paris during the darkness of the night. He had stopped at the palace of the Elysée. There he had concealed his defeat and his despair, as if he had condemned himself never again to enter the Tuileries, the palace of his power and his glory, from which this thunderbolt had degraded him.

A deep lamentation spread through the city as the citizens left their houses to assure themselves of the reality of the disaster. They spoke of it in an under tone, they forced themselves still to doubt it; but at eight o'clock everything was confirmed. Mourning, terror, pity, and the secret joy of some, ill-disguised under the pretended sorrow of their words, but above all, the apprehension of the consequences, were pourtrayed upon every countenance. People flocked to the public gardens, and towards the vicinity of the Elysée to witness the entrance and the exit of the ministers and the dismayed courtiers, and to listen to all the rumours that issued from this myste rious palace. Its gates were guarded by veterans and by grenadiers of the Imperial Guard.

VIII.

On quitting Philippeville the Emperor travelled by an indirect route, and with a calculated intermission of speed, that his arrival in Paris might not take place till the shades of night. A courier having been despatched to his brothers, they had got the apartments of the Elysée prepared for his reception.

The Elysée, an almost regal residence, concealed at the extremity of the city in the midst of a garden, under the trees of the Champs-Elysées, from which it derives its name, had belonged to Madame de Pompadour, that queen of the elegant vices, the arts, and the voluptuousness of Louis XV. After the death of the favourite, this prince had purchased back this hotel, which, since that period, had been devoted to the entertainment of the foreign princes and sovereigns who came to visit Paris and the French court. It had been inhabited by Murat after his marriage with the second sister of Napoleon the Consul. It was a species of family hotel, first royal, then national, then imperial, partaking at once of sovereignty and of private life, an intervening stage between obscurity and the throne. Napoleon, in going there, seemed to acknowledge himself, before hand, to have half forfeited the Empire, and to admit, by this undecided sort of residence. that if he had not as yet actually abdicated, he already looked forward to the possibility of being compelled to do so. He had, in short, descended one step towards a deposition, either forced or voluntary. There was an extreme propriety in his choice of this palace,—a symptom of modesty and of grief, by which he disarmed public anger, and seemed to court from public opinion indulgence and even pity.

Pity, in fact, would have been excited on seeing him enter furtively into this last asylum of his power. By the gleaming of some torches, borne by a small number of servants, he threw himself from his carriage upon the steps of the Elysée, into the arms of Caulaincourt, who was waiting for him since nightfall, upon the threshold.

Caulaincourt was the only one of his ministers in whose

presence he could feel at ease in such a moment. Less a minister than a friend, and once already a witness of his expiring throes of power at Fontainebleau, there was nothing to conceal from him in this second fall, for he had seen all, pitied all, and soothed all in the first. It is men of this description that friendship reserves for fallen pride in its humiliation, and for prosperity dethroned amidst its faults. Caulaincourt was melted on beholding again, so unlike himself, the man he had seen set out six days before, master, in hope at least, of France reconquered, and Europe intimidated.

The long vigils, the anxieties of two battles, the fatigue of so many hours riding, or standing, in the midst of his army; the pressure, impossible to calculate, of the unexpected sense of defeat after the anticipation, in his own mind, of a victory; remorse for his own errors as a general, in a decisive battle lost by indecision and temporising; the spectacle of a rout the most sinister he had ever witnessed, for that of Moscow might be imputed to the elements, but that of Waterloo to himself; the reaction of this event upon France and upon his destiny; the joy of his enemies, the discouragement of his friends; the audacity it would give to those men who were watching at Paris his successes and reverses, to measure thereby, as they had always done, their baseness or their insolence; indecision, that double burthen of the mind, which would have sometimes retained him with his army, and at others urged him on to Paris; his regret when he had taken one of these steps that he had not pursued the other; the first humiliation of a man who had been once beaten down but never degraded; uncertainty of the attitude which the Chambers would assume towards him, and of what he would have to submit to from them, or could dare against them; the enemy advancing by forced marches on his footsteps, and which would not grant time even to his anxiety to cool down and take counsel; finally, illness, which aggravates everything, and which at this moment deprived his body of the strength and calmness necessary to support the agitations of his mind; all these circumstances united, had, in the course of three nights, added ten years to the age of Napoleon.

Caulaincourt thought he saw, not the Emperor, but his shadow. His bent head seemed to totter on his shoulders, his chest produced nothing but a sepulchral voice, he breathed with difficulty. In walking he only dragged himself along on the arms of his minister. "I am suffocating here," he said to Caulaincourt, throwing himself on a divan, and placing his hand upon his heart. "The army has wrought wonders! a panic terror seized upon it—all is lost! Ney conducted himself like a madman! He has made me massacre my cavalry. I can speak no more! A bath! a bed! I must have some hours repose to collect my thoughts, and to get to business!"

IX.

While the bath, his customary recreation after these fits of exhaustion, and in which he indulged even in his bivouacs, was preparing for him, he continued to ramble from one subject to another, like a man who takes in at a glance every view of his destiny at the same time. "I shall summon the two Chambers to-morrow, in an imperial sitting," he said. "I shall describe to them the disasters of the army, and demand of them the means of saving the country. After that I shall depart again." He seemed to be trying upon the mind of Caulaincourt the effect of the different ideas he threw out. The countenance of the minister sufficiently attested his opinion of their evident impracticability.

"Sire," he replied to him, "your disasters have already transpired; the Chambers are secretly hostile, the minds of members are hurrying on towards threatening resolutions against you, and you will not find in the Chambers the dispositions upon which you reckon. I have deplored your presence at Paris. The army is your only asylum, your only strength, and perhaps your only safety."

"The army!" exclaimed Napoleon; "I have no longer an army; I have no longer anything but a band of fugitives. I shall perhaps be able to find men again, but how am I to arm them? I have no more muskets. With union, however, all may yet be retrieved. I hope the deputies will second me;

that they will feel the responsibility which is about to weigh upon them. You judge them badly; the majority is French. I have no one against me but Lafayette, Lanjuinais, Flaugergues, and some others. They do not wish to have me—I know it—I am in their way. They would wish to work for themselves. My person here would be a restraint upon them!"

Caulaincourt responded to these ramblings of hope by a gesture of incredulity, when Joseph and Lucien, being informed of his arrival, hastened and threw themselves into their brother's arms. He repeated to them the same confessions, the same complaints of the loss of his army, and the same mental discouragement which he had evinced before Caulaincourt. They responded to him by the same incredulity. He then took his bath, in which he slept for some hours; during which time the ministers and courtiers, aroused by the noise of his return, hastened one by one to the ante-chambers of the Elysée, and mingling with the officers and the aides-de-camp, their master's followers and companions in arms, received from them the most sinister impressions of the battle, and communicated to them in return the discouragement and the murmurs of Paris. The words forfeiture and abdication were exchanged in a low voice, even amongst the most determined friends, until then, of Napoleon. Misfortune introduces severe frankness, even into palaces. Napoleon appeared lost to every thing but himself. Ambition, which so long had been his strength, now constituted his weakness. He refused to comprehend that which was well understood by men the least intelligent. He was no longer himself.

X.

On awaking he summoned his ministers, and ordered Maret to read to them the narrative of the battle of Waterloo. Every countenance was filled with consternation. Fouché himself affected to be touched by the fate of the Emperor. "Our misfortunes are great," said Napoleon, after this picture of his reverses; "I have returned to repair them, to inspire

with a great impulse both the nation and the army. If the nation rises, the enemy will be crushed; but if resources are withheld from me, every thing is lost. The enemy is in France; and, to save the country, I must have ample power: a temporary dictatorship! In the interests of the country I might assume it; but it is more constitutional that it should be decreed to me by the Chambers."

These words formed so great a contrast with the feeling, the murmurs, and the sternness of Paris, of the Chambers, of public opinion, and with the situation of a man who, after having first lost the Empire, and then taken its last army from France, returned to his capital without a single wreck of it, surrounded by a million of enemies, that no one responded to these hints of a dictatorship. All held down their heads, and left him to read in their silence its utter impossibility.

Carnot, as in 1793, appeared to be thinking more of the country than of liberty; he did not speak of a dictatorship, but of desperate measures of public safety—levies *en masse;* Paris in a state of siege; arming of the people; a struggle under the walls; a retreat behind the Loire, and a rising of the soil under the footsteps of the enemy. Fascinated by his souvenirs, Carnot did not comprehend that a people which fights for itself, for its regeneration, and for its independence, offers to patriotism another kind of devotion than that of a people exhausted of its blood, surfeited with glory, enervated by despotism, whom it was proposed to arm for a tyranny of which it was weary. Caulaincourt spoke of the concurrence of the Chambers as an indispensable measure. Fouché, who did not believe in it, left it to be hoped for. Decrès roughly avowed the existence of disaffection, and led them to fear the prompt insurrection of the deputies. Regnault de Saint-Jean d'Angely, until then facile and complaisant to ideas of despotism, spoke with his accustomed eloquence on the necessity for a great sacrifice. "What do you mean?" demanded the Emperor; "is it my abdication they require?" "Yes, Sire," replied Regnault de Saint-Jean d'Angely. "I may even venture to add, that your Majesty may not indulge in any illusion through the fault of your councillors that, if the abdication

does not proceed from you, it may be imperiously demanded by the Chambers."

Lucien, still rife with the souvenirs of his former eloquence on the 18th Brumaire, and of his new-born zeal for his brother, was indignant at the suppositions of Saint-Jean d'Angely. "I have been placed before now," he said with a proud disdain of the opinions of deliberative bodies, "in terrible extremities, and I have always found that the more threatening those extremities are, the more occasion there is for a display of boldness to conquer them. If the Chambers refuse to assist the Emperor, he will save the country without them. Let him alone assume the responsibility of preserving France, and let him proclaim himself Dictator!"

Carnot still approved this course, without pronouncing his opinion as to the title by which this extraordinary power should be designated. The Emperor then summed up with power, and with the manly eloquence of a statesman, his own ideas, those of his councillors, and those suggested by circumstances. He made upon the map of France an imaginary campaign, which should drive back the foreigners, reconquer glory, violate liberty to make sure of independence, and save the country. The excited auditors forgot, in listening to him, that the Dictator had no longer a people, the prince a throne, the orator a tribune, or the hero an army; that factions were within, the enemy at the gates of the country, and that the night was being consumed in magnificent dreams.

Day, in fact, had already appeared, and the urgency of the peril was hurrying the representatives towards the Chamber.

XI.

Fouché, before he had gone to the Elysée, had sent to forewarn his confidants. Manuel, an advocate of high repute, since become famous, Jay, Flaugergues, Dupin, D'Argenson, and La fayette; some of them instruments of the minister's intrigues; the others, concealed friends of liberty, burning to re-establish their eclipsed popularity on the ruins of a man to whom they had submitted for fifteen years, and whom they meditated on

pushing down into an abyss, immediately that his vanished glory should deliver him over to their envy and their hatred. "Everything is lost!" Fouché had insinuated to them; "the Emperor has no longer an army; think only of saving the country, and watching over liberty."

From this moment he himself opened private negociations with Lord Wellington, in order to be at once the inspirer of the anti-Bonapartist majority in the Chambers, the negociator of France with the man whom the victory of Waterloo had made the arbiter of the conditions of Europe, the superintendent of Napoleon at the Elysée, and the all-powerful moderator of the council of ministers; a quadruple part managed by Fouché with a skill equal to the boldness which had led him to undertake it; and which, after having made him the plotter of the drama, made him also master of the *dénouement*, whatever it might be.

This part of high intrigue bordered at the same time upon tragedy by the personal dangers with which it was surrounded. Fouché trifled thus alone, and with no other power than his own nature, with the vengeance of Napoleon, should the latter resume his courage for an hour; with the fury of the people, should they convict him of treason; with the resentment of the republicans of the Chamber, if they once perceived that he was sacrificing them to the Bourbons; and finally, with the ingratitude of the royalists themselves, if, after he should have given them back Paris and the throne, they should forget the benefit, and remember nothing but the regicide. No politician of modern times, not even Machiavelli, Retz, Shaftesbury, or Talleyrand, would have dared to spread, to tie, and to untie so many snares, at the risk of being caught himself in his own net. No one had to the same degree the necessary intrepidity to stake his own head, challenge the hatred, defy the suspicion, and brave death in machinations which were always suspended over him. He was supported, it must be admitted, not only by the pleasure of that superiority which enabled him to make a sport of thus playing with things and men, but also by the sentiment of rendering an immense service to his country, in snatching it, by a more humane capitulation, from

the extremities wherein Bonapartism, which had made it a prey, wished to force it to self-immolation, body and soul, blood and soil, for Napoleon. If the name of great statesman could exist without frankness, probity, and virtue, it must at this crisis have been conceded to Fouché.

XII.

The deputies, who had been forewarned by Fouché, had concerted matters with each other before they went to the Chamber. Lafayette prepared himself to resume his part of 1789, which had been interrupted by the republic, by the emigration, by the Empire, and by the long solitude in which he had been plunged; an incomplete part, because it was perpetually ambiguous, beginning everything and finishing nothing; a living programme, an eternal prelude, a wavering mind; smiling at the same time upon a constitutional monarchy and on a republic, as if to summon from both sides that popularity which he loved to accumulate, and of which he did not know how to make any decided use when once he had conquered it: a man at once useful and fatal to liberty; assisting it wonderfully in overturning, but embarrassing it in reconstructing; an aristocrat towards democrats, a democrat towards aristocrats; irreproachable as conscience, courageous as ambition, vague as hope, undecided as a passage between two eras; not daring to remain with one, nor go over altogether to the other; the genius of transition, who was summoned when there was a vacancy to be made and a reign to abolish.

He foresaw that the emergency now called him, as he had foreseen it in '89 and '91, and as he foresaw it still later in 1830. He hastened to see if this emergency was not by chance personified in his own name, full of that eternal presentiment which always called him back to himself. To assume an attitude in the name of his lost country and its threatened freedom, in bold rivalship with a despot already half overturned, was a position that must have tempted Lafayette. He took it with promptness and energy; but he began by sounding the strength which might still remain to Napoleon, and to win over

the discontents, the discouragements, the infidelities, and the ingratitude around him. He saw Carnot, and found him inflexible in his resolution to save the country through the Emperor. Carnot's illusion was not that of a statesman; a nation is never saved by the man who has done it violence, who has enslaved it, staked it for his own interest, upon a field of battle, and lost it: it is thus the finishing stroke is given to it; but the illusion of Carnot was, at least, that of constancy. He saw Fouché, and found him full of encouragement for the defection of the Chambers against a vanquished man, who could only attract the bitterest animosities of Europe, and the greatest calamities upon his country, without having henceforward the power of saving either that country or himself. Lafayette hastened to the Chamber and prepared himself to make the tocsin of his words resound in the ears of the republicans, in order to separate their cause from that of Napoleon. He there found himself in one common predisposition with Lanjuinais and Dupont de l'Eure, less ambitious of fame than of patriotism; with young Dupin, commencing his political life with a lively eloquence, and a boldness commensurate with the emergency; with Manuel, Fouché's speaking trumpet, for a long time wavering, like his patron, between Bonapartism and Orleanism, a revolutionary restoration of the Bourbons, or the republic; with Sebastiani, a countryman, pupil and accomplice of Napoleon on the 18th Brumaire, a camp favourite of Napoleon's, afterwards discontented, irritated, full of murmurs against his old benefactor, and of tenderness for the Bourbons; a strong-minded and politic man, speaking little, daring much, seeing justly, going straightforward, and never recoiling; also with Jay, D'Argenson, Flaugergues; with all the veterans of the revolution of '89, aspiring to find again an opportunity for lost freedom; and with all the young men brought up under despotism, impatient to free their country from the regime of the sword, and their souls from servitude.

These men formed, if not the majority, at least the thinking portion of the Chamber of Representatives; the Bonapartists were but a small number. The greatest number was composed of new men, unknown until then, as they were unknown after-

wards in the councils of the nation; without credit in public opinion, who had profited by the opportunity of the 20th March to canvass for popular candidateships in a political accident, from which men of serious minds had kept aloof. These men were unsteady and malleable by the power of eloquence, flexible to circumstances, without support either in themselves or in the country; equally ready to sustain the conqueror, as to desert the vanquished. The confused, precipitate and popular election from which they had issued, half Napoleonists and half revolutionists, left them at liberty to serve Napoleon even to madness or to rise in furious insurrection against him, under the appearance of republican spirit. Such an Assembly was eminently suited to the vicissitudes of the time, to the hand of Fouché, and to the posthumous popularity of Lafayette. Fit to serve, fit to betray, but, above all, fit to bend before every breath of war, of intrigue, and of emergency.

XIII.

At the period of the *Champ de Mai*, Lafayette had already instigated Carnot and Fouché to avail themselves of this assemblage of the people, of the National Guard, and of the army in the Champ-de-Mars, to stir up the city against the Emperor, and to hurl him from the Empire, even from the summit of the throne elevated for this ceremony. Carnot had refused from fidelity, Fouché from good sense. The opportunity was more sure and more certain at the Elysée. It was from the summit of the tribune, in affecting the courage of Brutus, and pointing out the vanquished Emperor, threatening the Assembly with his dictatorship, that Napoleon might be precipitated, despoiled of his glory, and separated from his army.

Lafayette ascended the tribune. The whole revolution seemed to ascend it with him, for the first time since 1789. His name was resonant, his appearance imposing; imagination anticipated, and all eyes followed him. Tall in stature, noble, pale, cold in aspect, with a reserved look, which appeared to veil mysterious thoughts; with few gestures, restrained and caressing; a weak voice without accent, more accus-

tomed to confidential whisperings than oratorical explosions; with a sober, studied, and elegant elocution, wherein memory was more conspicuous than inspiration; he was neither a statesman, nor a soldier, nor an orator, but an historical figure, without warmth, without colour, without life, but not without prestige; detached from the midst of a picture of another age, and reappearing on the scene in a new one. No one knew what he was going to say. He might equally by a word attach to Napoleon the still undecided revolutionists, or snatch them from him to his ruin.

"When for the first time," said he, "for so many years, I raise a voice which the old friends of liberty will still recognise, I feel myself called upon to spe[illegible] of th[illegible] dangers of the country, which you alone have now the power of saving.

"The sinister [illegible] which were spread about are now unhappily [illegible] this is the moment we should rally round the ancient tri-coloured standard of liberty, equality, and public order. It is that alone which we have to defend against foreign pretensions and internal treason. Permit a veteran of this [illegible] was always exempt from the spirit of [illegible] some [illegible]liminary resolutions of which you [illegible] the [illegible]ssity."

[illegible] deep thought and reaction followed these words through all the Assembly. Though temperate in accent they were [illegible] intention towards Napoleon. They had been framed [illegible] that perfidy of eloquence, to carry to the ears [illegible] the very soul of France what it would be [illegible] to express in words. This "veteran of liberty" who thus reappeared upon the scene, held out in the tribune the revolution with himself against a vanquished despotism. This *old* tri-coloured flag, distinguished by a single epithet from the imperial tri-coloured flag, prostituted to the glory of one man alone, sufficiently designated the colours of the revolution; while the "internal treasons"* necessary to prevent the dictatorship of Napoleon, sufficiently indicated, without naming it. The blow was given, the man was struck, the Emperor and

* Or internal criminal attempts (*tentatives intérieures*).—*Translator.*

the Empire were covertly held up as public enemies to the national representation, to Europe, to the nation, to the republicans, to the patriots, and even to the royalists. The whole patriotism of the country separated, with Lafayette, its symbol from the cause of Napoleon. What remained to him? Implacable royalists, an unpopular family, and a personal party weak and vanquished.

Lafayette, triumphant and applauded, far more by hearts than hands, seemed to have been nurturing within his soul, during fifteen years, this single moment. Was it, however, his part to be the first to strike this wreck of glory; he who had been delivered from the dungeons of Olmutz, and restored to liberty, to his country, and to his family by the intervention of Napoleon? It must have cost him greater pangs than those who owed Bonaparte nothing except hatred. But ideas have no gratitude, patriotism has no weakness of the heart. Lafayette owed much to Louis XVI, and yet he did not object to being his keeper at the Tuileries, and at Varennes He owed something also to Napoleon, but did not hesitate to become his executioner. Are there different laws then for nature and for policy? The hearts of men must answer the question.

XIV.

After this preamble of Lafayette's, he read the following propositions:—

"Article 1st. The Chamber of Representatives declares that the independence of the country is menaced.

"2nd. The Chamber declares itself permanent. Every attempt to dissolve it is a crime of high treason. Whoever is guilty of such an attempt is a traitor to his country, and shall be instantly condemned as such.

"3rd. The army of Lille and the National Guards, who have fought, and who are still fighting to defend the liberty, the independence, and the territory of France, have deserved well of the country.

"4th. The minister of the interior is invited to assemble the general staff, the commandants and majors of the legions of the Parisian National Guard, in order to consult on the means of supplying it with arms, and to fill up the complement of this citizen force, whose zeal and patriotism the experience of six-and-twenty years, offer a safe guarantee for the liberty, the property, and the tranquillity of the capital, and the inviolability of the national representatives.

"5th. The ministers of war, of foreign affairs, of police, and of the home department are invited to present themselves in the midst of the Assembly"

XV.

The Assembly breathed more freely as it listened to these words. One hand had removed the load of uncertainty which had weighed for the last twenty-four hours upon the hearts of all. In applauding Lafayette, and in voting for his propositions, it escaped from the extremities of the crisis, which it did not wish to carry to the point of martyrdom, and it did so by appearing to revolt against dictatorship and tyranny. A heroism of attitude covered a cowardice of resolution. It is always thus that political bodies mask their retreat or their defection. Heroism may be expected from a man, never from an Assembly. A man who fails in his duty bears for ever on his name the taint of his weakness; but a body has no name, and casts its honour and its responsibility upon time. Lafayette was the idol of public irresolution.

Everybody put his individual responsibility under the shelter of his name. The Assembly voted, with the precipitancy called for by the urgency of the peril, the printing of its adopted propositions; in order that the people, excited by the dangers that threatened liberty, should forget the dangers that threatened the country, and should think of themselves instead of their army and their Emperor. The word dictatorship, synonymous with tyranny in France since the days of Danton, Robespierre, and Vergniaud, who had exercised it

so often in the tribune, and who had constituted it the mortal accusation of all, a remained impressed upon the public imagination as a crime without a name.

XVI.

While this vote was being given, Napoleon continued to broach to his council of ministers and his votaries, chimerical plans of levees *en masse* of all France, and of ideal military operations. The enthusiasm which he was endeavouring to excite around him seized upon himself; he became intoxicated, as it had often happened to him of late years, with his own words.

"Yes," he repeated, "the presence of the enemy on our territory will impress, I hope, upon the representatives the sentiment of their duties. The nation has not elected them to overturn but to support me! I do not fear them! Whatever they may do I shall always be the idol of the army and of the people! If I only said one word the Chamber would be sacrificed. It is not for myself that I tremble, but for France. If we quarrel amongst ourselves we shall experience the fate of the Lower Empire! The patriotism of the nation, its hatred of the Bourbons, and its attachment to my person, still offer us immense resources; our cause is not desperate."

At the moment that he was thus beguiling his soul with vain words and wasted moments, Regnault de Saint-Jean d'Ángely, at once a representative and a councillor of the Emperor, entered in dismay from the Chamber, recounted Lafayette's audacity, his speech, the applause by which it had been ratified, the adoption of his propositions, by which the government was reclaimed by the Assembly, the Chamber declared permanent, a declaration at all times equivalent to the dictatorship of the legislative power, invoking the sole and supreme authority in the name of the public peril; he then laid upon the table the propositions that had been adopted. The Emperor read them, coloured, turned pale, bit his lip, contracted his brow with a bitter frown, and affecting as much contempt as he really felt anger: "I was right," he said, "in thinking it necessary to dismiss those people before my departure; it is all

over now, they are about to ruin France!" thus throwing upon the national representation the destruction of the country, which he wished to shift from himself upon every one else, so heavy did he anticipate it would weigh upon his memory. Then suddenly terminating the sitting, and yielding, as at Fontainebleau, to the first indication of the hostility of public opinion: "I see," he added in a low voice, loud enough, however, to admit of his words being heard and reported to his enemies, in order to preclude the necessity of ultimate violence, "I see that Regnault has not deceived me. Well then, if necessary, I'll abdicate!"

But, as if he repented having thus confided his final resolution to the ears of Fouché, and of others who were spies upon his audacity and his weaknesses, he annulled his words by saying: "Before I yield anything, however, I must see what this enterprise against me will produce. Return to the Assembly, Regnault; tell them I am here, in deliberation with my marshals; that the army, after a signal victory, fought another great battle; that everything was going on well; that the English were beaten; that we had taken their colours, when treason spread a panic terror; that my army is rallying; that I have given orders to put a stop to the rout; that I have come to Paris to concert measures with my government and with the Chambers, and that I am at this moment occupied with those measures of public safety which circumstances demand."

Carnot departed at the same time for the Luxembourg, charged with the same message to the peers of France, who were more subservient, but not less in a state of commotion than the deputies.

XVII.

The Chamber, on the motion of Lafayette, had summoned the ministers to lay before it a direct statement of the posture of affairs. This was already an assumption of the reins of government, and an exclusion of the Emperor. He was indignant at this pretension, and forbade his ministers to obey; he struggled for a formality of his reign as he would have struggled for the

reign itself. He did not dare to resist or to yield entirely; but as if to hide from himself his forced acquiescence, he averted the difficulty, and from his own impulse he charged his ministers with a message in his name for the Assembly. Uneasy at the discouragement so legible in the countenance and the words of Caulaincourt and Davoust, distrusting Fouché, dreading the weakness of some and the treason of others, he could not find in himself the impulse, the eloquence, and the civil courage necessary to brave the looks, the murmurs, and the tumultuous excitement of an Assembly, to control it by greatness of soul, or to fall before it with the majesty of misfortune. He remained shut up the whole day within the walls of the Elysee, or in the shades of his garden; and he charged his brother Lucien to exert for him again that ascendancy of eloquence which had once before changed into victory his personal weakness on the 18th Brumaire.

Lucien was admirably adapted for such a mission by his republican acquaintance with great assemblies, by his revolutionary eloquence, by the pledges he had given to liberty, and by his intrepidity of soul. The austerity of his long voluntary exile, his abstention from all complicity in the tyranny during the domination of his family, his patriotism, greater than his ambition, his return to Paris at the moment when the adversity of Napoleon reminded him that he was of the same blood, and when the dangers of the nation reminded him that he was a Frenchman; and finally, the part that was assigned him, at once dramatic, antique, and touching: to plead at the same time for a crown that he had disdained, for a brother by whom he had been proscribed, and for a country on the brink of destruction, imparted to Lucien inspiration, confidence, and passion, equal to the task. Plutarch has not a more tragic combination of events, of situation, of relationship, and of policy in the annals of historical families. Lucien, who had an instinct of antiquity and the drama, felt this. He devoted himself with pleasure, to the scene, to the tumults, and even to the poignards for his brother. That day elevated him in his thoughts far above those accidental monarchs the satellites of his house.

XVIII.

But the day was wearing apace in these paltry contests of the Emperor with his destiny, and these chicaneries of etiquette and attributes with the Chambers. Dictatorship could not be had by begging for at such a critical moment, by his presence he might have obtained from the enthusiasm of the Assembly what he could not seize by the hands of a few soldiers. Every moment lost by Napoleon in deliberation, in waiting, in hesitation, and vain wishes to be daring, followed immediately by a still threatening resignation, was a gain to the Assembly by the increased boldness of his enemies, and by the impatience, the bitterness, and the murmurs of the fickle mass. Regnault de Saint-Jean d'Angely had scarcely quitted the hall after having accepted his mission, and promised a prompt communication of the measures meditated by the Emperor, when a representative, Felix Desportes, had ascended the tribune, and carried by acclamation a motion for the appointment of an administrative commission of five members charged to protect the Assembly. This was proclaiming to the nation that they felt themselves threatened, and that they called the citizens into the camp of the people against the cabal of the Dictator. "Where are his ministers?" demanded Fouché's confidant, Jay. "Why do they not appear? Who keeps them back? If they resist the orders of the Assembly make them responsible for their disobedience!"

It was Fouché himself who thus spoke with the voice of Jay. Fixed at the Elysée, as Petion formerly was at the Tuileries, by his official post, and by the will of the Emperor, he had slipt a note written in pencil into the hand of one of his adherents, in which he had requested Jay to obtain an imperative motion from the Chamber which should deliver him from his captivity in the council. Others proposed to withdraw the command of the National Guard from the Emperor, and to give it to Lafayette, the name most significative of dethronement and forfeiture.

They did not, however, dare at so early a stage to vote this

measure, which was adjourned rather than rejected. They however reiterated their injunction to the ministers, to appear and speak. Lafayette prompted, pressed, and acceded to everything: but some republicans, more disinterested, or more timid, yielded with repugnance to these impatient proceedings, and thought it would be better not to precipitate the Emperor so suddenly and so low, but to leave for a few days longer a chief to the army, and a negociator, sword in hand, to the country. The prudent and temporising Dupont de l'Eure expressed his scruples on the subject to Lafayette. "I should understand your precipitation," he said to him, "if you felt yourself strong enough to stop the foreigners with one hand, and to restrain the royalists in the interior with the other. What would you have? What do you expect?" "Fear nothing," replied Lafayette, with that quiet smile, the habitual expression of a man who looks beyond the present danger, and who indulges with complacency in the mirage of his faith or his illusions; "fear nothing: let us first get rid of this man, and everything will settle of itself."

Lafayette was sufficiently well practised in emergencies to know that the man most fatal to liberty was the one who had destroyed it. He had self-love enough to believe that France would confide to himself the solution of the crisis in which she was expiring; that his name would impart at the same time enthusiasm to liberty, moderation to the allies, intimidation to the Bourbons, and might also be a rainbow of reconciliation, European and constitutional, of which, as in '89, he would be the dictator or the arbitrator.

Sebastiani renewed the proposition to summon all the commandants of the National Guard before the Assembly. This accomplice of the 18th Brumaire affected to dread more than any one else a renewal of that crisis on the present Chamber. He was desirous of redeeming his former complicity by a greater distrust of his old general, and by a more jealous zeal for the national representation. In the vindictive soul of a Corsican one insult blots out a thousand benefits. The Emperor, by open expressions of contempt, had turned his favourite Sebastiani into an implacable enemy. His proposition multiplied the

alarms, whether real or affected, of the Chamber. The tribune remained empty, and the deputies, collected in groups, were conversing in an under tone, like men who congregate together on the approach of a tempest. Every noise at the doors, every rumour from the portico, every movement in the galleries, made them tremble. They were in momentary expectation of a tumultuous invasion of the fédérés, who had been shouting since daybreak under the garden walls of the Elysée, or an assault from the troops, who were beginning to return in irritated bands to Paris.

Night was approaching. Neither Napoleon nor the Chamber dared to unravel the knot of destiny by one final resolve. Everything was left to time, and time gave everything to the enemy. The people of the faubourgs, and the disarmed fédérés, were gathered confusedly together around the Elysée, as if to provoke the Emperor to a display of energy which should raise him from his prostration, or else to be witnesses of his fall. That people upon whom his tyranny had weighed so heavily, and who had so bitterly execrated his name while giving up to him their revolution, their liberty, their treasure, and their blood, seemed at this critical moment to recollect nothing but his glory. The people are great in themselves, and by some unaccountable analogy of nature they love greatness even in tyranny. They possess more heart than intelligence; and through the influence of that organ are pathetic, and take a touching interest in a drama personified in a man. Finally, the people are influenced by curiosity, which is the passion of crowds. Life is a drama, of whose catastrophes they love to be spectators. We cannot otherwise account for the assemblages of the people of the faubourgs of Paris around the Elysée during these dying throes of the power, the soul, and the genius of their Emperor. They seemed to hear and to feel through the walls of the palace the anguish and the palpitations of the heart of their hero. The trees of the Champs-Elysées, the walls and the roofs of the surrounding houses, and even the outer railings of the palace, were covered with an attentive, sorrowful, and silent crowd, seeking to catch a distant glimpse of the movements in the interior

through the open windows, and uttering shouts of "Vive l'Empereur!" every time that Napoleon showed himself on the threshold of his saloons, or was seen walking, in conversation or profound reflection, in the long alleys of his garden. A sad and magnanimous adieu of a people who forgot their own punishment in the contemplation of his glory, and who pardoned their hero for having been their oppressor.

Napoleon was conferring in private with Lucien, and was giving his secret instructions to this negociator, unknown to his ministers, in an alley of the garden, where these two brothers were walking slowly under the eyes of the people

XIX.

Lucien, who had enjoyed a repose of fifteen years retirement from public affairs, in obscurity and solitary communion with the ancients, through the studies with which he occupied his life at Rome, thought he should find again in the French of 1815 the resolution and energy of the men of 1792. But he was ignorant of the degree of weakness and abasement to which long servitude, corruption, the thirst of enjoyment, the lassitude of struggling, indifference to the yoke, and flexibility to all opinions, had degraded in soul and character the political part of the nation. He still calculated on great sentiments, on desperate resolves, and on great actions. He attempted to re animate the inspiration and the confidence of his brother. He reviewed with him the instances of devotion, the dictatorships, the abdications after re-conquered territories, the thrones given back as worthless playthings, the liberties restored, the republics raised up, the nations saved, then crowned by the hands of their liberator, the new titles invented by the gratitude of the people, the great ambitions of civic virtue in place of the vulgar ambition of power, the soul of a hero passing into the soul of a nation, animating it thoroughly with its patriotism, raising it with one impulse from under the feet of the enemy, conducting it to victory, and then giving itself up to its judgment, prepared to accept either a new coronation, or an im-

mortal proscription. But to accomplish all this, an hour of boldness, a supreme responsibility incurred without casting a glance behind, a crime against legal formalities, a revolt of heroism against the apathy and the ingratitude of an assembly, an insurrection encouraged by the army and the people, an opposition, sword in hand, to the Chambers, a proscription braved, a stroke of a poignard, if necessary, risked in exchange for a second 18th Brumaire! These were the counsels of Lucien.

Napoleon, on the contrary, wearied with fifteen years of action, enervated by long prosperity, accustomed to ready obedience, astonished at the first murmurs against his authority, satiated with glory, reduced in physical power, superannuated by the Empire, incredulous of popular devotion, because he had replaced it by cupidity, flattered by so long a continuance of success that he could now do nothing but yield to defeat, dreading to invoke liberty from the bosom of the people, lest it should appear to him under the aspect of revolution and of vengeance, and seeking in himself for his once unconquerable will, but finding nothing there but irresolution, was repugnant to boldness and enterprise. He imagined but did not dare to accomplish it. He would rather have wished that his usurpation should be brought to him from the Assembly ready made. He who had so much despised the tardy hesitations, and the fatal forfeitures of Louis XVI., as he descended step by step from his throne to his execution, imitated the apathy of this unfortunate prince in the face of the revolution. He deliberated at the moment he should act, and was daring in ideas, but dared do nothing in his measures. He consumed the time in councils, he gave orders and he revoked them; he wished and he repented having wished, he spoke of using force and he quailed under the obstacle. He threatened with all the disdain of his popularity, of his unlimited power, and of his army, the national representation at once unpopular, disarmed and talkative, which he had within two paces of him, and he trembled before five or six obscure tribunes, before the phantom of Lafayette, invoking the phantom of liberty.

XX.

The people, witnesses of his dejection, could not comprehend his tardy proceedings, and were impatient at the prolongation of his councils. The multitude instinctively felt that if the country was to be saved it must be by resolution and the man. They were astonished, however, that this man should fail them and himself at such a moment. They encouraged him, summoned him, and pressed him by their vociferations; loudly demanding from him orders, chiefs, and arms. The Emperor seemed at once flattered and importuned by these acclamations, which were to him both a reproach and a symptom of popularity. He responded to them occasionally by a smile of sadness and an appeasing gesture. The shouts and aspect of the people prevented him from meditating in freedom, and made him vacillate twenty times within the hour between the Empire and abdication.

Lucien, on the contrary, endeavoured, by signs of intelligence to the fédérés grouped around the walls, to encourage these demonstrations, and to turn them, in the dejected soul of his brother, to the support of his own energetic counsels: "Look," he said to him, "at these people, hurrying from their faubourgs, the foci of patriotism, under the impulse of a disinterested instinct, because they see in you at this moment their country and their independence! Listen to those cries! They call upon you for arms! They supplicate you to give a chief to this multitude! It is the same throughout all the Empire. Will you, therefore, abandon France to the foreigner, and the throne to the factions?"

But nothing could conquer the indecision of Napoleon, who bowed his head beneath fatality. This man, who had dared everything when Fortune was favourable, at length appeared to feel that man can do nothing when she is adverse. He confessed the nothingness of the human will when that will is in opposition to times and events. He avowed himself vanquished, not by the enemy, but by public opinion.

"Am I then more than man," he replied with bitterness to

Lucien, "to bring into union and agreement with me 500 deluded deputies?" Then excusing, even by a tardy scruple of virtue, his inaction against the Chamber, which he had threatened an hour before. "Am I then," he added, "a miserable factionist, to kindle a fruitless civil war? No, never! Let an attempt be made to gain over the Chambers: I ask nothing better! I can do everything with them! I could do much without them for my own interest, but without them I cannot save the country! Go and present yourself before them; I consent to it! I forbid you, however, on leaving this to harangue those people who are asking me for arms. I am ready to try everything for France, but nothing for myself!" He forgot that he had tried the seduction of the army at Grenoble, to re-conquer the throne, and Waterloo to preserve it.

"Go," he said to Lucien and his ministers, "go and speak of the interest of France, which ought to be dear to all its representatives: I shall make my decision on your return."

They accordingly went and left him alone to his irresolution. It was evident that he was compromising with necessity, but it was already lowering upon him with a more threatening aspect than ever in the Chamber. His temporising, which was a sign of his weakness, encouraged the more timid to abandon, and the more hardy to threaten him in their turn.

XXI.

The deputies amongst themselves now spoke out boldly what in the morning they had only murmured in an under tone. Lafayette, Manuel, Roy, Dupin, Duchesne, and Lacoste, spoke of forfeiture and arrest. The arrival of Lucien and the ministers imposed silence on these conversations, and an attitude of deliberation on the Assembly. Lucien demanded that the galleries should be cleared of the public, to ensure that secrecy to the deliberations so essential to the importance of the communications which the government was about to make in the name of the Emperor.

The galleries were accordingly cleared. Night was falling, the tribune was only illumined by the sepulchral glare of

candles. The tribunitian figure of Lucien recalled the days of liberty; his name the usurpation of power at St. Cloud. and the subsequent years of despotism. The tardy, but ardent devotion he had evinced towards his brother since the 20th March, invested him with a suspicious and threatening aspect in the eyes of the Chamber. After having so long regarded him as the Cato of the imperial family, they were astonished to find in him so much complicity in the interest of a second Empire; they thought he was wearied of his stoicism, and ready to merit his pardon from Napoleon by services of ambition. The part played by Lucien since the landing at Cannes justified these suspicions. In him the brother had absorbed the citizen. He pushed his race forward to thrones, as if the loss of thrones by his family had taught him their value. He was, therefore, an organ injudiciously chosen by Napoleon to plead his cause before an Assembly, weary of the ambition of this tribe of thrones.

The Assembly, however, was astonished at the moderation and resignation of the message which Lucien read in the name of his brother. Napoleon, forestalling the wishes of the two Chambers, invited them to open themselves to him to preserve France from the fate of Poland, and from the yoke of the Bourbons. He proposed to them the appointment of five commissioners who should come to an arrangement in their name with his ministers on the means of saving the country, and of treating for peace with the allied powers.

This was the capitulation of France after the defeat of the Emperor, but with the hope, if not of saving the national power and the glory of its arms, at least to save the wrecks of the imperial throne for Napoleon. Thus the peace broken by the enterprise of the 20th March, the blood of 30,000 soldiers, the treasures, the armaments, the inviolability of the frontier, the fame of the army and of its chief would have been thrown away, but the dynasty of Napoleon would have been saved for France with the perspective of those hatreds which this dynasty had revived and would perpetuate against the nation. Such a proposition, submitted for a moment to public opinion, now in a state of prejudice and irritation, bore on the face of it the

naıveté of insanity, or the insolence of derision. It might have been imposed upon the Assembly by an exercise of power, but to effect its adoption by discussion was an absurdity.

In proportion as Lucien advanced in the reading of this message, the murmurs increased. They burst forth when he descended from the tribune. Thoughts that were hitherto repressed now exploded with anger and indignation. Disdain and defiance were the only replies the orator received from the Chamber. Lucien and the ministers were crushed and overwhelmed under the exclamations of the deputies from all sides. "What!" they cried; "the author of our calamities finds no other inspiration in his soul than to reign still over our wrecks, and over the dead bodies of our children! Instead of generously sacrificing himself for the country, which is nearly annihilated in his cause, he invites us to sacrifice it totally for the interest of his family. He has not known how to conquer! He has not known how to die! He has only known how to fly! And it is in the name of his defeat, of his weakness, and of his flight, that he demands of us to concert with him: as if, instead of being the sovereign representatives of the people, we were nothing more than the subordinate accomplices of a dethroned factionist!" Jay, inspired by the eye of Fouché, rushed to the tribune in the midst of these imprecations, to embody them in the premeditated decorum of a parliamentary resolution. "Even were I," said he, "to experience the fate of those generous representatives of the Gironde, protesting against the slavery of the convention, and sealing their courage with their blood, I will speak; but before doing so, I demand that the ministers here present speak first, and inform us if, in the present state of affairs, the country is in a condition to resist the armies of Europe, and whether the presence of Napoleon is not an invincible obstacle to negociation and to the peace."

XXII.

A murmur of approbation almost unanimous from the benches of the Assembly, and an accusing and significant

silence on the ministerial benches, followed this apostrophe. Fouché hesitating, and as if affecting to confess his embarrassment, dissembled in his attitude, ascended the tribune, and said that he had nothing to add to the reports already communicated to the Chamber, on the extremities to which the country was reduced abroad, and its dangers at home. This was an approval of the orator, and a provocation to insurrection by the alarm which was still further increased by silence.

Jay made an eloquent commentary on this silence of Fouché, and showed military despotism to be the source of all the country's calamities. He accused Napoleon of being the sole obstacle to the reconciliation of France with Europe. He demanded if a nation, exhausted of its heroism and its blood by ten years of aggressive war against all the nations of the continent, and now on the point of falling herself, not for want of courage, but of combatants, under the onset of those nations, ought to sacrifice with herself, her soil, and her name, and her future generations, in the cause of a man to whom she had given every thing but her last breath? Then addressing the motionless and dismayed Lucien in these words: "And you, prince," said the orator, "you who have exhibited a noble character in good and evil fortune, go back to your brother! Tell him that the Assembly of Representatives expects from him a resolution which will do him more honour in future times than all his victories. Tell him that by abdicating his power he may save France. Tell him that his destiny speaks and urges him to it, and that in a day, in an hour perhaps, it may be too late."

He concluded by proposing to the Chamber to send commissioners to Napoleon to demand of him his abdication, and in the event of his refusing to give it, to pronounce his forfeiture of the throne. Louis XVI. had not, before his defeat of the 10th August, been subjected to such severities of fate, and such injunctions from the Legislative Assembly. The revolution was avenging itself for the long thraldom in which Napoleon had kept it. This was only a reprisal of the National Assembly; for Jay knew that the evening before his departure for Waterloo, the Emperor, opening his mind to one of his

indiscreet confidants, had exclaimed: "Let them take care! Let them make haste with their insolence! I can bear them no longer. I am going now; but one victory, and I will make them return to their customary obsequiousness! Two victories, and I will send them about their business!" There was, however, intrepidity in the language of the orator; for the Emperor, though shaken, was still living and reigning within a few paces of the tribune, while he was giving utterance to this summons. Napoleon, though falling, might still avenge himself, and regain by this vengeance, not the power of saving France and his throne, but the power at least of striking an enemy.

XXIII

Lucien, a witness of the applause which rang from every part of the Assembly at the hint of an abdication, or at the declaration of forfeiture, found courage in despair, and confidence in his old experience of the fickleness of assemblies, which elevates and abases them in the same hour from revolt into prostration. He rushed to the tribune. He invoked the sacred name of country; he mingled it with that of the man who had ruined it; he reproached France with desertion and ingratitude, and the French with not having done enough for the cause of his brother. He appealed to the enthusiasm which had crowned him a second time, to the oaths of the *Champ de Mai;* he invoked patriotism, and he depicted the national character as degraded by the cowardly acquiescence of the nation in making the vanquished Napoleon the ransom of an ignominious capitulation. Loud murmurs and insulting exclamations were the only replies to the reproaches of Lucien.

These reproaches, however, were rebutted by Lafayette in a few terrible words, indistinctly muttered by public discontent for three months past, and which only awaited the proper hour, and a popular voice to give them utterance. "What!" he exclaimed, "is it you who dare accuse us of not having done enough for your brother? Have you then forgotten all that we have done for him? Have you forgotten that the bones of our children, of our brothers, everywhere attest our fidelity, in the

sands of Africa, on the borders of the Guadalquivir and the Tagus, on the banks of the Vistula, and in the icy deserts of Moscovy? During ten years and upwards 3,000,000 of Frenchmen have perished for one man alone. For a man who still, even now, wishes to struggle with our blood against Europe!" "Yes, yes!" exclaimed the representatives with the avenging consciousness of a sacrificed nation. "This is enough," resumed Lafayette; "this is enough for one man! At present our duty is to save our country!"

Twenty orators contended for the tribune to support the tardy imprecation of Lafayette. The retribution of an Assembly is pitiless. The terror of a stroke of audacity and despair on the part of Napoleon was pressing upon every heart. All that Lucien and the ministers could obtain from the representatives, was a little time to consult the Chamber of Peers, and to combine the resolutions of these two bodies. They hoped for better things from those senators chosen by the hand of Napoleon himself, than from deputies elected by the people.

Lucien and the ministers hastened thither accordingly. They found in this Assembly not more confidence, but more decorum and more consideration for the Emperor. This first discussion was cold and dignified. The old experience of those men, hackneed in emergencies, sufficiently revealed to them that it was no longer necessary to hurl Napoleon violently down, for that he was about to fall himself before the force of events; and that a beaten man bold enough to assert in his defeat his title to supreme power, would only find in his dictatorship of a day, a scaffold on the morrow. Lucien hastened to the Elysée to give an account to his brother of the dispositions of the two Chambers.

Lucien had not been intimidated by the hostility of the representatives. The attitude of the Chamber of Peers had confirmed him in the desperate resolution of braving the Chamber of Deputies, of dissolving it, and of seizing the dictatorship. He endeavoured to convince his brother that his only salvation lay in audacity. "In such extremities as this," he said, "a man can do whatever he dares." But Napoleon,

who liked to hear these arbitrary counsels, the dying adulation of his unlimited power, put off their execution from hour to hour. He seemed to expect that some outward accident should relieve him from the responsibility of the emergency; or that the hour having past in expectation and deliberation, no other resource would be left to him than to submit to his destiny, an excuse which weakness reserves to itself to avoid confessing its own inertion. This man, who so well knew the value of time, and who was aware that in revolutions, as in war, to be outstripped is to be vanquished, would not have condemned himself for two days and two nights to a state of immobility if he had not resigned himself to abdication. He was saving appearances with his brothers, with his friends, and with himself; for everything indicated in his tardy proceedings a resignation which screened itself under a remnant of timid volition. He was trafficking with fortune, he was saving his honour, he was reserving to himself the power of one day saying: "If the Chambers had understood and seconded me, I would have saved my throne and my country."

But he was in reality of too politic and soldier-like a disposition to allow himself to be blinded by the illusions which he subsequently wished to affect before his worshippers. A million of men emboldened by three years of victorious retaliation, at this moment crossing the frontiers, a country exhausted with efforts, an army in a state of dissolution, a murmuring capital, a national representation in revolt, a competitor for the throne profuse in promises of liberty and peace, the northern and eastern provinces conquered, those of the west and south ready to rise for the King's cause, what could Napoleon do with a few hours of empire? A second capitulation for his family and himself! Was this worth the trouble of making an 18th Brumaire of the faubourgs against the capital, and of some disbanded soldiers against the nation? He did not say this to Lucien, but he felt it. All that he wished for was the right of complaining. He commenced at the Elysée that long conversation, and that eternal recrimination against the men of the 20th March, and against France, which he continued at St. Helena.

XXIV.

Benjamin Constant, at first his accuser, then his accomplice and his counsellor of the 20th March, exhibited during these two last days the same fluctuation of attitude and acts which he had shown some weeks before. This alternate courtier of popularity and court favour, had an abyss to clear behind him to retrace his steps, and to obtain pardon for his sudden devotion to Napoleon after his inconceivable defection. Waterloo was a personal defeat to him. Unable to believe at the first moment in the total eclipse of that star of the Emperor to which he had so rashly attached his responsibility as a statesman and a man of intelligence, he was one of the first to hasten to the palace to advise arbitrary measures. He was anxious to push Napoleon to the most desperate extremities, for the fall of the latter would necessarily precipitate his own. But this courtier of recent date was not one of those men who struggle long against the palpable evidence of a downfall, and bury themselves beneath its ruins. The reiterated accounts of the total rout and complete annihilation of the army, the coldness, the murmurs, and the approaching hostility, almost unanimous, of public opinion, the revolt in the Chambers, the acrimony of Lafayette, Sebastiani, and their friends, in pressing an abdication, or inflicting a forfeiture, had not failed to shake Benjamin Constant himself, and to make him in the course of a few hours pass over from the dictatorship to resignation. He interposed himself, as an officious negociator, between the Chambers and Napoleon, to evince his zeal to the former, and to the latter his attachment.

XXV.

By his presence in the garden of the Elysée he interrupted the conversation of Napoleon with Lucien, and adopting a style of language altogether different from that which he had used the evening before, he seemed desirous of preparing Napoleon for a sacrifice called for, as he said, by his glory, as well as by his

patriotism. "I understand you," replied the Emperor; "I am required to abdicate! But have they calculated the consequences of my abdication? Is it not around me and around my name that the army concentrates itself? Will not my removal from it occasion its dissolution? If I abdicate, in two days more you will have no army; that army does not understand your subtilties. Is it imagined that a few speeches from the tribune will prevent the dispersion of the troops? Had I been repulsed when I landed at Cannes I should have understood it, but I cannot comprehend why I should be abondoned now! It is not in presence of an enemy, at a few leagues' distance from us, that a government can be overturned with impunity. Do they think they can impose upon cannon with set phrases? If they had dragged me down a fortnight ago there would have been courage in the act; but I now form a portion of what Europe attacks, and therefore a portion of what France ought to defend. In giving me up she surrenders herself, she avows her weakness, and acknowledges herself vanquished. It is no longer liberty that deposes me, but Waterloo!"

Then assuming a more lofty tone, and like a negociator who exaggerates his conditions to obtain more favourable terms, feigning to have intentions which he did not dream of: "By what title, then," he added, "does the Chamber demand of me my abdication? Where is its authority? My duty requires me to dissolve it."

He became animated. The multitude who were crowding round the terraces of the gardens of the Elysée, fancying they saw in the gestures of their hero the resolution of appealing to his popularity and his patriotism against the Assembly and against the foreigner, redoubled their intermittent acclamations, as if to encourage him to be energetic. This multitude was principally composed of men whose appearance betokened indigence. "You see there," said the Emperor to Benjamin Constant, extending his hand towards these disinterested friends of his last hour; "it is not those that I have loaded with honours and riches who now with hearts and eyes condole with me in my reverse. What do these people owe me? Nothing. I leave them poor as I found them, but the instinct of

country enlightens them; the voice of the country speaks through their mouths; I have only to say one word, and in an hour the Chamber of Deputies would no longer exist. But, no," he continued, "the life of a single man is not worth this sacrifice! I have not returned from Elba to inundate Paris with blood!" These last words were sincere

History owes this justice to Napoleon, that, whether from a natural horror of popular excesses, the sanguinary spectacle of which had left a sinister impression in his soul since the 10th August, the massacrès of September, and the reeking guillotine; whether from a soldier-like repugnance all undisciplined forces, or respect for his future fame, he constantly refused, both on his return and on his fall, since the 20th March, to form an army of the populace against the nation. He preferred falling with dignity rather than raise himself by such auxiliaries On quitting his isle and braving the Bourbons and Europe he recoiled from the blood of seditions and from crime against civilization. Cæsar always but never Gracchus, born for empire, not for the turbulence of factions.

BOOK TWENTY-SEVENTH.

The 21st of J[illegible]ne—Meeting [illegible] Commission [illegible] Chamber of Representatives and the Ministers [illegible] Commission—The 22[illegible] [illegible] presentatives—Abdication [illegible] Mourgens [illegible] to [illegible] Emperor—The [illegible] Chamber of Peers—Its address to [illegible]

I

[illegible] the [illegible] sation with Benjamin Constant [illegible] which [illegible] philosophe and [illegible] the spoliation of his [illegible] they were deliberating [illegible] the commission appoint[illegible] Chambers to concert with [illegible] public safety, were there [illegible] Caulaincourt, Carnot, [illegible] and Dupont de l'Eure des[illegible] overthrow of the monarchy which [illegible] at the birth of the second republic [illegible] Dupin Boissy d'Anglas, always [illegible] country, Thibaudeau, equally an enemy to [illegible] republic and the Bourbons and who, through this double hatred was devoted to the Emperor

Lucien baffled between the irresolution of his brother and the increasing ascendant of Lafayette, was powerless, and evinced a disposition to compromise Lafayette was polite in his language, but implacable in his resolution

Dangers accumulating with the flight of time, the absence of the Emperor, and his dejection, already known through the

whispers of his counsellors, softened the hearts and mollified the proceedings of the commissioners. After a nocturnal deliberation, calm and quiet as the night, they decreed: "That the salvation of the country required that direct negociations should be attempted by the two Chambers with the allied powers."

This was deposing the Emperor, not yet from the throne, but from the government. Time would do the rest. Lafayette, Lanjuinais, and Fouché ventured to ask for more, and complained that the commission did not actually insist upon abdication.

II.

Napoleon was sleeping, while his enemies and his own ministers were thus deposing him at the Tuileries. All around him were astonished at his indifference and apathy. "He no longer conquered, as formerly, fatigue or sleep," said Benjamin Constant; "his power of action seemed to have reached its term." He showed himself on awaking, discontented, murmuring, and exasperated, but not hostile to the resolutions. He left everything to the mercy of his familiars, as if to shake off the weight of resolutions too heavy for his own will.

The Chamber of Representatives and the Chamber of Peers assembled at daybreak. The members vociferously demanded before everything, the immediate communication of the deliberations held during the night by the commission at the Tuileries. They were astonished at not receiving any. This tardiness appeared to their suspicious minds the indication of a struggle commenced at the Elysée against the Chamber. It arose, however, from nothing but an irresolution of the Emperor.

Ten thousand men of different arms had entered Paris during the night, and raised his hopes. The faubourgs were agitating in his name, and the fédérés had forestalled the break of day by flocking in numerous crowds, quivering with anxiety, under his windows. Lucien hastened to his brother, and enumerated the resources which still remained to him. Grouchy, who had escaped intact from the pursuit of

the Prussians, returned to France by Namur, with 40,000 men, and approaching Paris to join the remnants of Waterloo, rallied by Ney and Jerome; the depôts of the Imperial Guard, proud of their name, and incorruptible by all the efforts of the Chambers; 15,000 or 20,000 fédérés, who could be armed even that very day, and mixed with the troops of the line, if not to fight the enemy, at least to keep Paris under. It was essential, he said to Napoleon, to quit the Elysée immediately, an undecided halt in the eyes of public opinion, between the empire and deposition, to instal himself in the Tuileries, convoke there the council of state and the ministers, repossess himself of the government, and adjourn the two Chambers. In them would again be found that obedience or that cowardice of assemblies, which are insolent towards those who humour, and servile to those who brave them. These counsels of Lucien appeared at length to rouse Napoleon from his mental prostration. It was feared by those around him that he would rise from it by a stroke of audacity. But already some of his oldest and most devoted friends, Regnault de Saint-Jean d'Angely, Thibaudeau, and even his brother Joseph, had adopted more moderate counsels, and imparted underhand to Lafayette and the leaders of the Chamber, the warlike fluctuations of the Elysée. Joseph and his counsellors flattered themselves with a compromise between the worn-out ambition of Napoleon and the opposition of the Chambers; a compromise by which the Emperor should abdicate in favour of his son, and bestow upon Joseph the regency and the guardianship of the King of Rome. They expected at this price to obtain peace from the allied powers, the sanction of the Chambers, and from France the abandonment of the Bourbons. Fouché and his confidants cajoled the most compromised partisans of Napoleon in the Chambers and in the council with these illusions, and thus detached them from his cause, by saving in appearance the honour and the interests of the Napoleonist party. Manuel received the hint of this diplomacy from Fouché. He undertook to lull to sleep with this bait the last pulsations of imperialism and military energy in the Chamber and amongst the people.

"Abdication," said Fouché, even in the Emperor's presence, "will conciliate at once the interests of the Emperor as a father, and as a chief of a dynasty, and the interests of the country exposed and disarmed by the disaster of Waterloo. There will be no longer a pretext for war, and if the allies, indemnified by the voluntary retirement of the only man whom they have declared to be irreconcilable with the repóse of Europe, still continue hostilities, the Chambers, indignant at this perfidy and outrage against the independence of nations, will raise the whole of France for the cause of every citizen."

Caulaincourt and Maret, too clear-sighted to put faith in the scruples of the allies when conquerors, and in a national rising for an infant the captive of Austria, but too politic to push the Emperor and the capital to extremities of fire and blood, in which all would perish, not excepting the country itself, pretended to be satisfied with these reasons, and by their own weakness countenanced the weakness of the Emperor. The latter walked with broken pace about the council room, listening to everything, without being able to decide upon any, sometimes approving by a word, at others refuting by a gesture, and seeming, amidst the contradictory advice of all, to seek for a decision which he could not find in his own mind Regnault de Saint-Jean d'Angely waited in vain for that decision, which he had promised the deputies to bring to the tribune. It issued not from the lips of Napoleon.

The representatives, tired of waiting, vented their impatience in scattered groups, and tumultuous conversations, in which weariness expressed itself in menaces and invective against this man who could neither conquer, they said, nor acknowledge his defeat, nor boldly dare, nor wisely reign, nor peaceably descend from the throne. The president Lanjuinais could not restrain their anger or their murmurs. At length, at noon, he called to the tribune General Grenier, reporter of the commission of the Tuileries. The general read the report. It was considered derisive at a moment when the Chambers had to decide between the salvation of the country and the desires of one man alone, an obstacle at once to the independence of the nation and the freedom of the representation. The reporter

left the tribune amidst the clamours of the irritated Chamber. Le Grand, the young representative of La Creuse, ascended it to enumerate the dangers of the country. Other clamours from the imperialist benches made him descend from it, and accused him of spreading alarms. Another deputy proposed a declaration to the allied powers, to be borne by five diplomatic commissioners, and conceived in terms reassuring for the peace of Europe. Duchesne, representative of the Isère, wished to rend the veil, and spoke of Napoleon as the sole obstacle to the negociations. He was about to propose the abdication when Regnault de Saint-Jean d'Angely, warned by Lanjuinais of the necessity of preventing a deposition by a voluntary and more decent resignation of the throne, rushed to the tribune, interrupted the orator, and announced to the Chamber that before three hours had elapsed the Emperor would explain himself by a message conformable to the thoughts of all.

The deputies were indignant at this delay, and contended for hours and minutes with him to whom they had begrudged neither France, the throne, nor the blood of the country. "We have only one part to take," cried Duchesne, who had remained in the tribune; "this is to induce the Emperor, in the name of the salvation of the state, in the name of the expiring country, to declare his abdication." "Yes, yes," cried many voices from all parts of the Assembly, "let him abdicate! let him abdicate! if he wishes to avoid deposition!" "Wait," said Lanjuinais; "the salvation of the country will be found in the message that the Emperor is meditating!" "The salvation of the country," replied a stentorian voice, "is only to be found in abdication!" Lafayette, who saw that despotism was shaken, arose to give it a finishing stroke. "If abdication temporises," said he, "I shall propose deposition". He was greeted with a burst of applause. General Solignac, one of those men who like to preserve the decency of national scenes, and to maintain the dignity even of the vanquished, opposed himself to this impatience of Lafayette, and implored another hour. The Chamber seemed disposed to grant this respite to fortune. Lafayette, Sebastiani, Dupin, Duchesne, Lacoste, Girod de l'Ain, Roy, and Manuel, called loudly for an instant decision. The hour, however, was granted with difficulty, and the sit-

ting suspended. It had not yet expired when the representatives with their eyes fixed on the dial plate of the clock pointed out to each other the minute which the hand was about to pass over, and summoned the president to re-open the deliberation. "The accusation! the accusation! Proscription! Immediate arrest!" exclaimed pitiless voices. A confidential note from Fouché to Manuel, and communicated by him to his colleagues, announced that the Emperor was at that moment dictating his abdication.

III.

Napoleon, still in a state of irresolution, as we have seen him on the previous evening, during the night and in the morning, had been for the last three hours experiencing the counter shocks of the intelligence brought to him from the Chamber, and the news he received from the army. Surrounded by his ministers, by his intimate counsellors, by his brothers, and by the distant crowd around the Elysée, whose hollow murmurs penetrated even to the interior of the saloons, he went incessantly backwards and forwards from his cabinet to his garden, and from his garden to his cabinet, sometimes alone, sometimes with one of the confidants whose inspirations he listened to by turns. At every turn he made in the alleys of the Elysée, at every despatch he opened, at every fresh arrival of an envoy from the Assembly or the camp, his attendants expected to hear from him a definite resolution. He made a thousand contradictory ones. He thus a thousand times more wearied fortune, his counsellors, his brothers, and himself, than he would have done by one single energetic effort of his will. "You see," he said to his ministers, "that nothing is lost; and that numerous troops still remain to me." He ordered Davoust to go and make a reassuring report on the state of the army to the Chamber, convinced that this picture of his force would impose upon the Assembly. "They would not even listen to me," sorrowfully exclaimed Davoust on returning to the Elysée.

At length it was announced to him that the Chamber would only give him one hour to decide. At this insult he, who had

already abdicated so many times in words and deliberation before his council, was more indignant than at the forfeiture itself. "What!" he exclaimed, "do they threaten violence? Well then, since it is so, I shall not abdicate at all!" At these words his ministers, and above all, Fouché, trembled lest humiliated pride should reanimate him with the energy of despair. They looked at each other. "No," he repeated, "I shall not abdicate! The Chamber is nothing but a heap of ambitious Jacobins, whom I ought to have denounced to the nation and sent about their business. But the time that I have lost may still be repaired."

His counsellors began to be uneasy. Regnault de Saint-Jean d'Angely, one of those who spoke with more heart than the rest on the critical state of affairs, and whose attachment was the least distrusted by his master, conjured him pathetically to give a truce to fatal delusions, and not to commence a struggle with an Assembly who would point him out as the sole obstacle to a peace which had become the necessity and the passion of the nation. "Have you not once already sacrificed yourself for the common weal in 1814?" he said to him. "Repeat this sacrifice once more! This is the only reproach worthy of you to make against your fortune and your country!" "Have I ever refused to abdicate?" murmured the Emperor. "But I wish to be left to consider it in peace. When, however, I shall have abdicated," he added, as if he had already repented this forced concession wrested from his emotion, "you will have no more army, and in another week the enemy will be at Paris." His look and accent while speaking thus seemed to interrogate the ministers and generals present at this struggle, so obstinate, so prolonged, and so undecided in his soul. Their looks and attitudes, however, only replied to him by incredulity and dejection. He resumed his solitary walks in the most gloomy alleys of the Elysée.

IV.

But cries of "Napoleon hors la loi!" already responded in the Assembly to the last cries of "Vive l'Empereur!" which were exhausting themselves under the windows of his

palace, to provoke him to an energy which evaporated in words. Lanjuinais sent to him the commandant of the guard of the legislative palace to entreat him to hasten his message, unless he wished the Chamber to pronounce his deposition, and to issue a decree of accusation against him. Measures, in fact, were already taken to arrest Napoleon in the midst of his feeble circle of adherents, by the resolute members of the Chamber; and the men who were to execute this order held themselves in readiness at the first signal, in the ante-chambers of the Elysée. A more lengthened obstinacy might have occasioned bloodshed. The scene began to assume the sinister aspect of the depositions of the Roman emperors. Between the man and the country the sword might be called in to cut the knot.

Napoleon at length retired into a private cabinet at the extremity of the left wing of the palace, where, assisted by his brother Lucien, he slowly dictated, weighing every word he uttered, his final abdication.

"Frenchmen!" said the Emperor, "when I began the war for the upholding of the national independence, I relied upon the union of all efforts and of all wills, and upon the concurrence of all the national authorities. I had every reason to hope for success, and I braved the declarations of all the allied powers against my person. Circumstances seem to be changed. I offer myself as a sacrifice to the hatred of the enemies of France. May they prove sincere, and may it appear that they only wage war against me!

"My political life is terminated! I proclaim my son, under the title of Napoleon II., Emperor of the French.

"The present ministers will provisionally form the council of government. The interest which I take in my son induces me to recommend that the Chambers should immediately enact a law for the organization of a Regency.

"Unite together for the general safety and to the end of securing your independence as a nation. NAPOLEON.

"At the Palace of the Elysée, June 22, 1815."

His secretary, Fleury de Chaboulon, who had gone to seek at Elba this second fatality of a deposition, received Lucien's

manuscript from the hands of Napoleon to make several copies of it. The copies which were returned by the secretary a few moments after to the Emperor, bore the traces of tears. They were observed by Napoleon. Casting at the young man, lately the confidant of his hopes and now of his humiliation, a look full of reproach against his destiny: "They would have it so!" he said; thus throwing, as a last consolation of pride, the rashness of his return and the results of Waterloo upon a people who had neither provoked his ambition nor his disaster.

V.

On reading the act of abdication, Maret appeared to apprehend that the allied powers would not be satisfied with the terms in which the Emperor declared himself. "What do you mean?" asked Napoleon. "That the allies," replied Maret, "may perhaps require the renunciation of the crown by your brothers." "Ah! Maret," exclaimed the Emperor, jealous to the last moment of the future prospects of his dynasty, "would you then dishonour us all?" Napoleon, at the moment when everything was flying from his grasp, still imagined he had founded an empire for the collateral branches of his father's humble house. Genius does not preserve even great men from the illusions and the littlenesses of mediocrity. At such a moment even a child would not have indulged those hopes which Napoleon expected to see yet fulfilled by destiny.

He returned with his abdication in his hand into the council chamber, and gave the two copies to his ministers. Fouché at length held within his grasp the fruit so long denied to his impatience. He affected compassion, received the act with a profound obeisance from the hands of the Emperor, and carried it, followed by Carnot, Caulaincourt, and the other ministers to the Assembly. Carnot and Caulaincourt, while they recognised the necessity of this final capitulation on the part of the Emperor, evinced fidelity and emotion. It gave freedom to their acts, not to their hearts. In their attitudes and countenances they betrayed their sorrow, the one for the threatened independence of France, the other for the dethronement of his friend.

VI.

But these personal sentiments of sorrow and emotion for the man did not penetrate into the Assembly; or, at least, they were stifled there under the apprehension of a final attempt of Napoleon to seize upon the Empire again amidst its ruins, and amidst the rage of the country deceived by his promises and his disasters. While Napoleon was discussing the terms and the forms of his abdication, the cries for his deposition were multiplied in the hall of the Assembly. One of those men whose common-place sensibility leads them wherever there is a catastrophe going forward worthy of their tears, M. de Laborde, who had wept sincerely as he pressed the hands of Louis XVIII. on his departure from the Tuileries, now hastened from the Assembly to inform the Emperor, with similar emotion, that time was pressing, and that it was necessary to forestal the vote of the Assembly, if he did not wish that vote to be an insult. He had passed the ministers, it seems, without having recognised them.

"They are in a great hurry, then!" exclaimed Napoleon, pettishly; "tell them to have patience; I sent them my abdication a quarter of an hour back."

Fouché had already mounted the tribune, with the act of abdication in his hand. The sight of this sheet of paper, which contained the obedience of the Emperor to the Chamber and to the will of destiny, produced a general calm. It was, therefore, easy for Fouché to avail himself of the compassion which a great people owe to a great man and to a great sacrifice. The reading of the act was listened to in silence. There are words which soften in one moment the anger of assemblages of men. But there are men also who come forward opportunely and with a cool foresight of possible retractions, in events, to conclude and verify them by irrevocable acts, fortune's legists, who reduce into laws the decrees of fate—such on that day was M. Dupin. He rushed to the tribune with a written deliberation in his hand, and, lest the author of the abdication should one day withdraw it, as he had done that of Fontainebleau,

proposed the acceptance of this abdication by an authentic vote of the Chamber, in order that two parties, the nation and the Emperor, joining in the contract, the one could not withdraw from it without the consent of the other. M. Dupin, who was young and a formalist, did not yet understand that it is not the form, but victory or defeat, which confirms or revokes these abdications of empire. He demanded the appointment of a commission charged with the preparation of a new constitution, which should be sworn to by the *prince* chosen by the people. This word, which indicated the idea of another dynasty to the faithful partisans of the Empire, excited murmurs to which the enemies of the Empire did not deem it necessary at this moment to reply. Circumstances spoke and acted sufficiently rapid for them.

Another representative, Mourgens, demanded that the throne should be declared vacant, and that the Assembly should declare itself constituent. This called forth fresh murmurs amongst the adherents of the Emperor's dynasty. One of these demanded that the article of the act of the *Champ de Mai* should be read, which excluded the Bourbons for ever from the throne, that the nation might be made to blush for such a prompt disavowal of itself. Lanjuinais opposed the motion, on the pretext that the act was sufficiently known.

Regnault de Saint-Jean d'Angely, recovering his former eloquence, often profaned by the servility of adulation, melted the gallery once more by a contrast between the greatness and the abasement of his master's fortune. By eloquent concessions he adroitly evaded the propositions of M. Dupin and of M. Mourgens, merely admitting one-half of their decrees. The Chamber, satisfied with the conquest it had gained in an hour, voted, on the proposition of Regnault de Saint-Jean d'Angely, an address of respectful gratitude to the Emperor, to be borne immediately to the Elysée by the president and his secretaries. It also voted the nomination of a commission of five members, chosen from both Chambers, to carry on the government provisionally, and the confirmation in their functions of the ministers of Napoleon. The members of the commission of government were Carnot, Fouché, and General Grenier in the

Chamber of Deputies, and Quinette and Caulaincourt in the Chamber of Peers.

VII.

Meanwhile the Emperor, abandoned to solitude at the Elysée, in proportion as the power which was forsaking him passed over to the Chambers, to the commissioners, and to his own ministers, was waiting,—under a resignation which was not yet deprived of hope or the power of retraction,—the acts of the national representatives towards him. Informed every ten minutes by Lucien, Regnault, and his confidants of the alternate emotions of the Assembly, he received their intelligence in the retirement of his apartments and in his gardens. He never ceased walking therein, as upon the narrow space whence he observed the successes or reverses of his battles, with the disquiet agitation of a man who endeavours to cheat the fever of the soul by the movement of the body.

Night was falling: nothing yet indicated to him whether he should pass it free and active in a palace, or in the prison of a dethroned sovereign. All his thoughts, and all the thoughts of his brothers, were now concentrated upon the deposition, or upon the maintenance of his son and of his dynasty on the throne. He struggled no longer except for the ambition of his family, or for the Empire for his posterity. Dethroned himself, he still thought himself a conqueror if he prevented France from dethroning at least his name.

At length the deputation from the Chamber of Representatives was announced. It was in a great measure composed of his enemies. Although they disguised the deposition beneath a show of respect, the act of bearing to him the thanks of France for a compulsory abdication seemed more a mockery than a homage. No one was ignorant that this abdication, contested by him, and wrested from him by the menaces of public opinion, had been rather conquered than obtained; and that it was a sacrifice to force rather than a sacrifice to the country. He himself knew this better than any one.

A master, however, of his countenance and his attitude, he

assumed with grandeur the part which necessity had imposed upon him, and which the disguised respect of the Chamber permitted him to take. In the presence of Lanjuinais, Lafayette, and Fouché to allow resentment or humiliation to be legible on his features was to be doubly fallen. He assumed therefore an appearance of the most voluntary resignation, and the most disinterested patriotism. He divested himself of all pomp, like Diocletian at Salona, and spoke like a man no longer touched by events, except through the interest he feels for his country from the distance of his exile and the summit of his glory.

VIII.

Alone and standing in a saloon that was feebly lit up, with impassible countenance, when Lanjuinais, followed by his colleagues had been introduced, and had read to him the honourable and respectful declaration of the Chamber, he replied with the gravity of accent, and the meditative slowness of a man who seeks without solemnity his expressions in his heart: "I thank you," he said to Lanjuinais, "for the sentiments which you express; I desire that my abdication may produce the happiness of France, but I cannot hope it," he added with stern incredulity of accent; "for I leave the state without political direction. The time lost in overthrowing me," he said in a reproachful tone as he looked at the republican members of the deputation, "might have been employed in placing France in a position to crush the enemy. I recommend the Chamber promptly to reinforce the army." A pitiful decision for a general who had just destroyed the last armies of France, and who could only, during three months absolute dictatorship, levy for his cause 15,000 volunteers to reinforce his old bands. "Whoever wishes for peace must be ready for war. Do not place this great nation at the mercy of foreigners!" And the enemy was in the traces of him who was thus speaking, at the gates of Paris. "Beware of being deceived in your hopes, therein lies the danger!" As if the danger in such a conjuncture had not rather been in the invasion of the soil, thrown open by him to a million of strangers, than in a question

regarding his own throne. "In whatever position I may be placed, I shall always be satisfied if France is happy I recommend my son to France. I hope the country will not forget that I have only abdicated for him!" Paternal words, but personal, which awkwardly belied all his other disinterested expressions. "I have also made this great sacrifice," he repeated however, "for the good of the nation." Then resuming, the better to inculcate his real thoughts in the minds of the French people: "It is only with my dynasty that France can hope to be free, happy, and independent!"

The chief and the hero of this dynasty spoke thus whilst restoring France invaded, ravaged, and enslaved by the reprisals of all Europe, to a Chamber of Representatives who had no option between the ruin of their country, or a capitulation with the victors. Napoleon evidently did not dream at such a moment of deceiving any one amongst his enemies, or amongst the imperial patriots who were then listening to him; but he thought of posterity, which the myrmidons of his despotism would work thirty years to corrupt with the texts which he was preparing for them. He had a presentiment of the power of sophistry upon nations. He showed a genius for divining the aberrations of parties. He was great in his knowledge of our littleness, sublime in his contempt for humanity.

None of the inconsistencies of this speech escaped the members of the deputation, the respectful enemies of Napoleon, who heard it. No one refuted them. Propriety and misfortune alike forbade it. They cast down their eyes that [illegible] might not read therein either an acquiescence or a refutation of these last complaints which victory leaves to the vanquished. They retired in silence to report these confused expressions in a more fitting form to the Assembly. That body suspended its sittings during the night, to allow time and the commission of government to operate in the interim.

IX.

But the Chamber of Peers, composed in much greater number of the intimates of Napoleon, had not suspended its sittings.

A nocturnal sitting still contended there against necessity for the Empire and the crown. It was there that the Emperor's brothers, Lucien, Joseph, and Jerome, his uncle Cardinal Fesch, his old ministers, his high dignitaries, his councillors of state, his ambassadors, his generals, his courtiers, enriched with ten years' bounty, and aggrandized by titles and dotations, represented, above all, the desperate party of his fortunes. The Emperor still reckoned, not upon their gratitude, for he had vitiated the human heart too much to found any hopes upon the virtues, but upon the connection of their interests with his own. The dethronement of his dynasty would be a personal deposition to them all. They had cast in their lot with his. The ratification of the Chamber of Peers was constitutionally necessary to the act of the Chamber of Deputies, which had instituted a national government in the stead of an imperial regime, the secret wish of the Emperor and his family. That family now came to protest and to struggle against it

X.

Lucien, the most intrepid, the most eloquent, and the least unpopular of all the members of this court, ascended the tribune at ten o'clock in the evening. He attempted to take by surprise, through a vote of acclamation and enthusiasm, those men already enervated by the sentiment of a sinking soil which no longer bore them up, and the greater number of whom already only thought of seeking to obtain pardon for the 20th March, from whatever monarchy the defeat of Waterloo should impose upon them. "We have now to ascertain," cried Lucien abruptly, in the manner of the old orators, or of the tribunes of the convention and of the clubs, when addressing a people easily excited by voice and gesture: "we have now to ascertain if France is a free and independent nation! The Emperor has abdicated. 'Vive l'Empereur!' This is the cry of France and of monarchy, for every interregnum is a state of anarchy. This is the law of the State! Let the Chamber of Peers, which has sworn fidelity to this law and to the Emperor, and which has recently renewed its oath at the *Champ de Mai*, declare with a spontaneous

and unanimous movement, in the presence of Frenchmen and of strangers, that it recognises Napoleon II. for Emperor. I set the first example! I swear fidelity to the Emperor Napoleon II."

Lucien thought he was addressing a people; he was speaking to courtiers. His acclamation remained cold, isolated, and without echo upon his lips. His premeditated scene of antiquity or of the revolution failed in an age, surfeited with dramas, and experienced in fifteen years of servitude. Murmurs and laughter burst forth in reply to his improvisation.

A grave and sensible man, respectful towards misfortune, but inflexible to enthusiasm which might ruin his country, M. de Pontécoulant, inured since 1789, to revolutions and assemblies, succeeded Lucien, and spread the patriotic calm of his measured language upon the intemperate provocation of Lucien. "That which I would not have said of the Emperor in prosperity," said Pontécoulant, "I say now that adversity has struck him. I have received benefits from him and honours; I owe him all, and I have continued faithful to him until the moment he released me from my oaths. But an unusual act, a temerity without deliberation, has been proposed to us! Who are you that come hither to speak to us? Is this foreign prince a Frenchman? He may be one by his talents, and by the services which, at another epoch, he has rendered to liberty. I should be glad, for my part, to recognise him for a Frenchman, but does the constitution recognise him? No: it only sees in him a Roman prince, and Rome no longer forms part of our territory since 1814. What does he wish? That we should proclaim Napoleon II. Who is Napoleon II.? A child, a sovereign, captive at Vienna. And is this the sovereign that we should recognise for the master of France? The *senatus consultum* declares a captive prince to be denationalized. It would therefore be necessary to substitute a regency. What Regency? This is what you will proclaim!"

"To continue the Empire without the Emperor the day after Waterloo," said Boissy d'Anglas, "would be insanity! In relinquishing the throne the Emperor draws down the Empire with him!"

The general assent to these remarks of Boissy d'Anglas and of Pontécoulant carried despair into the soul of the young soldier, whose complicity at Grenoble had occasioned by his example the defection of the army and the ruin of the country. The cause of Napoleon was now the only one that remained to him. Its fall would carry with it his own fame, his ambition, and perhaps his life. He became agitated in his place, where the counsels of his neighbours, more cool and disinterested than himself, vainly endeavoured to restrain him. He at length sprung forward to the tribune.

This was Labédoyere. The delirium of his remorse was legible on his handsome features. The prudent men of the Assembly deplored his presence in a tribune where this young man could only choose between the humiliating avowal of a military defection, and a senseless pertinacity in the ruin of his country. He had already spoken in the morning in favour of Napoleon II., the refuge of the vanquished Bonapartists.

XI.

"The abdication of Napoleon," said he with an accent of insulting indignation against his colleagues, "is null; I declare it to be so, if you do not proclaim Napoleon II." Murmurs of incredulity replied to this. "And who are opposed to it?" he demanded with a still more threatening attitude; "the worshippers of every power, who know how to detach themselves from a monarch with as much adroitness as they displayed in flattering him!" He forgot that he himself had forsaken the Bourbons, the protectors of his family, after having received rank and favour from them. "Yes, I have seen these men," he continued amidst marks of disdain and inattention from his colleagues, whom he wished to reduce to silence by insult; "I have seen them crowd around the throne at the feet of the fortunate sovereign! They fly from it now that he has fallen into misfortune! They reject Napoleon II. because they are eager to receive the law from foreigners, to whom they already give the title of allies and friends!" The Chamber roused at these reproaches broke out in terms of indignation. "Well then!"

pursued the young general in a still more animated tone, "I declare that if Napoleon II. is not proclaimed, the Emperor ought to draw the sword! He will find himself at the head of 100,000 men! Every generous heart will flock to his standard. He will be surrounded by those brave warriors covered with wounds who still preserve for him the last drop of their blood." Then turning towards some generals and marshals more impassable than himself, and whom he seemed desirous of pointing out to public reprehension, "Woe," he exclaimed, "to those vile generals who have already abandoned him, and who are, perhaps, at this moment meditating fresh treasons!" Indignation at this reproach of treason from the mouth of a man who had himself betrayed his duties, was loudly expressed by the Assembly. "The nation," continued Labédoyère, "would be unworthy of the Emperor if it abandoned him a second time in his reverses."

At these words protests arose on every side against this pretended abandonment, too dearly belied by the blood of 30,000 Frenchmen shed for him at Waterloo, and still flowing under the ramparts of Paris for his cause. "What!" responded the young soldier, astonished at this disclaimer, "have we not already abandoned him once? And are we not ready to abandon him again? What! A few days have scarcely elapsed since, in the face of all Europe, you swore to defend him! Where are your oaths? Where your enthusiasm? Where are those thousands of electors, the organs of the people's wishes? Napoleon will find them again if, as I demand, it be declared that every Frenchman who shall desert his colours shall be judged with the utmost rigour of the law! that his name be declared infamous, his house razed to the ground, and his family proscribed! Then we shall have no more traitors! No more of those intrigues which have occasioned the late catastrophes, and some of whose authors are perhaps now sitting here!" Labédoyère alluded both by word and look to Marshal Ney himself, who in the morning's sitting had dismayed the Assembly, and refuted Labédoyère, by avowing and perhaps exaggerating the disasters of Waterloo; as if an avowal of the extremities to which his country was reduced

had been a reparation of his defection at Lons-le-Saulnier, and the preliminary to his reconciliation with the Bourbons, whose return he had indicated as inevitable. But the anger and the delirium of Labèdoyere, invoking punishment on the heads of supposed traitors, as if to divert the thunder from his own, made some start with anger, others with impatience, all with indignation.

Unanimous exclamations invoked against him the severity of the president, and a retractation of his insults. "No, I listen to nothing!" he replied to these exclamations. Valence, who had grown old in camps, rose to give him a paternal counsel, but he refused to listen to him. Massena, crowned with his silver hairs his victories, and his fidelity to France, cried out to him, "Young man, you forget yourself!" "He thinks he is still in the guard-room!" disdainfully exclaimed old Lameth, who recognised in these apostrophes the impotent fury of the convention, formerly braved by him.

Labédoyère, whose voice was drowned by the excitement of the Chamber, gazed round deliberately upon all the members of the Assembly. "It is then written," he said, collecting the whole power of his voice, "that nothing is ever to be heard here but base sentiments!" At this collective insult the Assembly seemed to have but one soul, one attitude, and one gesture, to repulse and throw it back with disdain upon the orator. "Yes!" he repeated, with an attitude of disdain and insolence, which aggravated the bitterness of his language. "yes, for ten years past this Chamber has only echoed the basest sentiments."

The tumult here rose to such a height as entirely to interrupt the deliberation.

XII.

The Count de Ségur proposed, in more polished and moderate terms, that the government should assume the title of a regency. To these men the nation seemed to have so far forgotten its own titles that it could not govern itself but under the name of a master even absent! Maret supported Ségur in the interest of the dynasty which dragged them down in its

fall. Lameth opposed this pertinacity to subject the country to a family which condemned it to bury itself in the ruins of a dynasty The King Joseph, who had had a glimpse of the title of regent, insisted in vain. Flahaut and [illegible] outrageously advocated that heritage which would save at least the wreck of the family.

The Assembly, however, decided on nothing but the nomination of two members chosen from its body, to complete the provisional government.

The deputation of the Chamber of Peers [illegible] one of the orators who had most flattered the Emperor while in power, Lacépède, presented itself in the middle of the night at the gates of the Elysée, to announce to Napoleon that he was abandoned even by his partisans, and that his family alone, or his domestic circle, had maintained the principle of his dynasty

The deputation from the Chamber of Deputies had scarcely left his apartments, when it met on the threshold that from the peers. This was the last blow to the obstinate hopes of Napoleon He had had faith in the eloquence of Lucien, in the number of his relations, of his servants, and of his courtiers, who crowded the Chamber of Peers. He thought he should find there at least a legal support against the fickleness and the independence of the Chamber of Representatives. Undeceived on this point by the first words of Lacépède, his anger was ill concealed. "I have only abdicated for my son," said he in a menacing tone, repeating the words of his aide-de camp Labédoyère; "if theChambers do not proclaim him, my abdication will be null! I shall remain in possession of all my rights"

These rights of one man, contesting, face to face, the disposal of himself against a nation, were those which he had seized with the armed hand of a few soldiers on the 18th Brumaire, and seized anew on the 20th of March by the seduction of the army. But the Chamber of Peers, springing itself from these two sources, could not oppose to him any rights more sacred, and therefore the deputation listened in silence. "After such proceedings as these," he added, "they will bring back the Bourbons! You will soon shed tears of blood! They flatter themselves they will have the Duke d'Orleans but the

English will not suffer it: Would Orleans himself ascend the throne before the reigning branch had abdicated? He would be an usurper."

He was already discussing with deaf and dumb necessity. He who had so often invoked destiny as the supreme right, now yielded to it murmuring in his turn. Destiny was Waterloo, and the inevitable reaction of a defeat upon an empire whose only foundation since the 20th of March was a victory of the army over the people, avenged, unhappily for the country, by the defeat of the army by foreigners. The principle crumbled beneath the consequences. The sword had done all: that broken, all crumbled to nothing—the empire, the man, and the nation.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

PRINTED BY W. CLOWES AND SONS, STAMFORD STREET.